SIRAT-UN-NABI

ALLAMA SHIBLI NU'MANI

Rendered into English

by

M. TAYYIB BAKHSH BUDAYUNI

Vol. II

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SIRAT-UN-NABI

[THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET] Muhammad
(peace be upon him)

Volume II

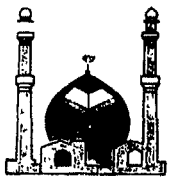
70843

By

'ALLAMA SHIBLI NU'MĀNI

Rendered Into English by

M. TAYYIB BAKHSH BUDAYŪNI



IDARAH-I ADABIYAT-I DELLI
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CONTENTS

			Page
PREFACE		...	vii
	Ghazwat—The Battle of Badr		
1.	Expeditions Preceding Badr	...	6
2.	The Battle of Badr	...	11
3.	The Battle of Badr spoken in the Qur'ān	...	31
4.	A Review of the Battle of Badr	...	35
5.	The Real Cause of the Ghazwa of Badr	...	49
6.	An Essential Point	...	52
7.	Consequences of Badr	...	53
8.	Ghazwa of Sawiq	...	54
9.	Marriage of Fātima	...	55
10.	Miscellaneous Events	...	57
	Ghazwa Uhud		
11.	Ghazwa Uhud	...	58
12.	Miscellaneous Events	...	75
	Ghazwat and Saraya		
13.	Sirya Abi Salama	...	77
14.	Sirya Ibn Unais	...	77
15.	Sirya Bi'r Ma'ūna	...	77
16.	Sirya Raji'	...	79
17.	Miscellaneous Happenings	...	82

Treaty and War

18.	Treaty and War with the Jews	...	83
19.	Ghazwa Bani Qainuqā‘	...	90
20.	Murder of Ka‘b Ibn Ashraf	...	91
21.	Ghazwa Bani Nadir	...	94

Ghazwa Murisi‘, Event of Ifk and Ghazwa Ahzab

22.	Ghazwa Dūmat al-Jandal	...	99
23.	Ghazwa Murisi‘ or Bani Mustaliq	...	100
24.	Marriage with Juwairiya	...	103
25.	The Event of Ifk (False Accusation)	...	105
26.	Ghazwa Ahzāb	...	106
27.	End of the Banū Quraiza	...	119
28.	The False Story of Raihāna	...	125
29.	Marriage with Zainab	...	126
30.	Miscellaneous Incidents	...	130

Treaty of Hudaibiya and the Bai‘at al-Ridwān

31.	Treaty of Hudaibiya	...	132
32.	Bai‘at al-Riḍwan	...	138
33.	Rulers invited to Islam	...	146
34.	Miscellaneous Incidents	..	154

Ghazwa Khaibar

35.	Ghazwa Khaibar	...	156
36.	Ghazwa Dhi Darad	...	159

37.	Truth about Ṣafiyya	 169
38.	Another Debatable Point	... 176
39.	Distribution of Land	... 177
40.	Political Conditions and Legal Regulations	... 178
41.	Wādi al-Qura and Fadak	... 180
42.	Performance of 'Umra	... 180

The Battle of Muta

43.	The Battle of Muta	... 183

The Conquest of Mecca

44.	The Conquest of Mecca	... 187
45.	The Sermon of Victory	... 195
46.	Main Implications of the Sermon	... 195
47.	Proclaimed Culprits	... 199
48.	Valuables of the Ka'ba	... 203
49.	Conquest of Mecca and Destruction of Idols	... 204

Hawazin and Thaqif

50.	Hunain	... 206
51.	Autas	... 214
52.	Siege of Tā'if	... 215
53.	Distribution of Booty	... 217
54.	Miscellaneous Incidents	... 220
55.	Takh'ir or Temporary Separation	... 221
56.	False Stories	... 230

The Battle of Tabūk

57.	Ghazwa Tabūk	... 235
58.	The Dirār Mosque	... 238
59.	Hajj and Declaration of Quittance	... 239
60.	Defence	... 257
61.	Harassment of the Trade-Caravan	... 259
62.	Restoration of Law and Order	... 261
63.	Reasons for Surprise Attacks	... 265
64.	Propagation of Islam	... 267
65.	Methods of War Reformed	... 271
66.	War becomes an Act of Piety	... 280
67.	Distinction between a Prophet and a Conqueror	... 283
INDEX		... 285

PREFACE

This book is the Second Volume of English Translation of *Sirat-un-Nabi* originally written in Urdu by the late 'Allama Shibli Nu'māni, a well-known Muslim historian who requires no commendation. His famous work *Sirat-un-Nabi* also hardly stands in need of any introduction.

Translation in itself is a difficult task but Mr. Budayūni has made a very successful attempt. He has the full command of both the languages, Urdu as well as English, the one translated from and the other translated into. This translation is, therefore, not only accurate but couched in good English.

The First Volume of the English Translation of *Sirat-un-Nabi* has been greatly admired by the reader within and outside the country. This Second Volume deals with *Ghazwat* and we hope that reader will like it.

We are highly obliged to Mr. Muḥammad Iqbal Ṣiddiqi who revised the manuscript and prepared it for the press.

MUHAMMAD IKRĀM SIDDIQI

GHAZAWAT[1]

If the Muslim writer, when he comes to speak of military exploits, is fond of a grandiloquent style and windy discourse, the European ear, curiously enough, is not the less eager to listen to it. The Western listener desires to see the story grow and expand ever more ; for the ghastly spectacle of Muslim tyrannies that he contemplates to paint would for his artistry, require, not a few drops, but full stream of human blood.

European writers, one and all, have penned down the biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) so as to make it look one continuous chain of wars, all intended to convert people by force. This being a downright lie, we consider it necessary to decide this issue before we deal with the Maghāzī.

It is generally thought that so long as Islam was confined to Mecca, it was subject to all sorts of hardships, but when it shifted to Medina its evil days came to a sudden end. This, however, is a mistaken idea. Islam had, no doubt, tremendous trouble at Mecca. With all that, it was a single trouble. At Medina it multiplied itself and put on varied forms. All Mecca was one community ; at Medina there were the Jews along with the *Anṣār*, who had little in common with their neighbours in custom, habit, religion and integrity of charac-

1. We have reserved a separate chapter for dealing with the causes and events of these battles. They would not fit well in the general sketch as mere side-issues. But that perhaps can be appreciated only after a summary glance over the battles, and hence we place it at the end. Readers are requested to keep this in mind.

ter, and stood as their rivals. To make matters worse, a third element, namely the Hypocrites, came upon the scene. Housed inside the fold of Islam they were more dangerous than either the Jews or the Quraish. Had Mecca been won, the whole of Arabia should have bowed down because of its extensive influence. Medina had no influence beyond the city wall. Hitherto it had enjoyed complete immunity from outside dangers; but with the arrival of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), it had become the main target of the infuriated Quraish.

A few days after the arrival of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) from Mecca, the Quraish addressed a letter to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay, who had been the leading chief in Medina and whom the *Anṣār* were preparing to instal as their king at a royal coronation. This letter ran as follows:

> "You have given shelter to our man. We tell you either to kill him or turn him out of Medina; otherwise we swear by God that we will all attack you and destroy you, and seize your women."[1]

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) heard of this he went to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay, and asked him if he would fight his own sons and brothers. As a large number of *Anṣār* had turned Muslims, 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay realised the significance of the Prophet's remark, and did not comply with the commands of the Quraish. After the battle of Badr another letter with similar contents was addressed by the Quraish, of which we shall speak later on.

All the same, the encouragement by the Quraish had turned the head of the Hypocrites and the Jews of Medina. During this period, *i.e.*, before the battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) once

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Salutation"—S.

rode through the habitations of the Banū Hārith and Banū Khazraj. He came upon a group of non-believers and hypocrites sitting with a number of Muslims and Jews. As the donkey moved, some dust was raised. 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay covered his face with a piece of cloth, and contemptuously told the Prophet not to raise dust in that manner. The Prophet saluted the gathering and recited a few Verses of the *Qur'ān*. "O man", said 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay,[1] "I do not like this. Even if your words are true, you need not disturb us in our meetings ; better speak to those who go to you." The Muslims got ablaze at this insult and would have come to blows had not the Prophet intervened and pacified the parties.

Once, during the pre-Badr period, Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, the chief of the tribe of Aus, visited Mecca to perform his 'Umra. Umayya Ibn Khalaf had been his old friend, and this friendship had outlasted Sa'd's conversion to Islam. Accordingly, Sa'd put up with Umayya at Mecca. One day Sa'd and Umayya were both on the way to the Ka'ba for making a *Tawāf* (circumambulation round the Ka'ba), when they came across Abū Jahl. "Who goes with you," asked Abū Jahl of Umayya." "He is Sa'd," said Umayya. Then Abū Jahl turned to Sa'd and said, "You people have given shelter to the Sabaean (the non-believers of Mecca called the Prophet and the Muslims Sabaeans or the apostates). I cannot bear to see you step into the Ka'ba. By my God, you would not have returned home, had not Umayya accompanied you." Sa'd replied, "If you let us not perform the Hajj, mind, we will stop your Medina route (the trade route to Syria.)"[2]

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 93, Vol. II & *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Salutation."

2. This incident with more details is there in *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* in the beginning of the chapter on Maghāzī.

As custodians of the *Haram*, the Quraish were respected all over Arabia, particularly the tribes settled over the area between Mecca and Medina recognized their leadership. The Quraish had, consequently, worked up all the tribes under their influence into hostility against Islam, so that upto the sixth year of the Hijra, the tribes of Yaman and other distant places could not visit the Prophet[1] (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). In the sixth year of the Hijra a delegation from 'Abd al-Qais came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) from Bahrain ; these men stated that the tribes of Mudarr did not let them pass to Medina and so they could only attend on him during the days of Hajj when generally wars remained suspended.[2]

The Quraish did not stop at that. As they had informed 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay, they were making preparations for an attack on Medina for the extermination of the Muslims. For a long time the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had to pass sleepless nights for fear of the attack. In the words of Nisā'i, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), on his arrival in Medina had to keep awake throughout the nights.

Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhari has a report, in the Chapter on "Jihād" that once the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) expressed the wish that a proper man other than himself could keep watch that night. Sa'd Ibn Waqqāṣ, fully armed, kept watch that night ; and then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) could sleep. Furthermore,

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1. Ibn Hishām, Chapter "Delegations." The words are : "And this is because the Quraish exercised great influence over the people and all the leaders of Arabia acknowledged their supremacy ; and they had set them all ablaze against the Prophet."

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Delegation of 'Abd al-Qais." Other authorities too mention it.

there is a report in Hākim in the following words :

> "When the Prophet and the Companions came to Medina and the *Anṣār* gave them shelter, all Arabia was up in arms against them ; and the Companions had to sleep all night long with their weapons on their persons.[1]

The writers on Maghazi begin their narrations with these incidents, attributing the out-break of hostilities to the divine permission to make war upon the infidels that was given to the Muslims in this year. But a minute observer can see, from their own statements, the whole situation in its true perspective. Mawāhib Ladunniya and Zurqani say that God allowed the Muslims to fight the non-Muslims on the 12th of the month of Safar in the second year of the Hijra. In support they cite the version of Imām Zohri which runs thus :

> "The first of the Verses that were revealed to the Prophet was the one beginning with the words : "*Uzina lillazina...*", which says that those against whom war is waged (*i.e.*, the Muslims) are in their turn allowed to fight as they are being persecuted and God is surely enough to help them."[2]

Ibn Jarīr, in his Commentary, says that the first Verse that enjoined the Muslims to take up arms was :

> "And fight in the way of Allāh with those who fight with you."[3]

It is to be noted that both these Verses allow the Muslims to fight only those who are aggressors. It is then evident that the Muslims were in fact forced to appeal to arms.

Any way, the fact is there that on arrival in Medina,

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1. *Lubāb fi Asbāb al-Nuzūl* by Suyūtī, *Sūra Nūr*, and *Musnad* of Dārimī too has this report.

2. *The Holy Qur'ān, Sūra Baqara* or "The Cow."

3. *Ibid.*

the first concern of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was to adopt measures for self-defence. He had to think of not only himself and the Muslim *Muhajirs*, but also of the *Anṣār* because the Quraish had decided to exterminate the latter for having given shelter to the Muslims, and had wrought up the tribes to the same heat of fury against Medinites. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of two plans. The first was to close for the Quraish the trade route from Mecca to Syria, the life blood of their power and pride, and thus bring them round to negotiate peace. It may be recalled that it was this step with which Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh had threatened Abū Jahl at Mecca. The second measure the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) contemplated was to make alliances with the tribes round about Medīna to maintain peace with the Muslims.

Expeditions Preceding Badr

It was in these circumstances that, before the battle of Badr, parties of fifty or a hundred persons came to be despatched along the road to Mecca. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not personally join any expedition before the one sent to Abwā', in Safar of the 2nd year of the Hijra. Historians record three earlier expeditions as Sirya[1] of Hamza, Sirya of 'Ubaida Ibn Hārith and Sirya of Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ. But there was no shedding of blood on any occasion ; either the Quraish managed to avoid an encounter or the parties yielded to the intervention of some peace-maker. Historians declare that these expedi-

1. Sirya is an expedition in which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself did not go with the Companions. If any battle takes place, the Companions fight it under the command of their leader appointed by the Prophet. A Ghazwa is an expedition which is led by the Prophet himself. Some apply these terms according to the number of men despatched. They use the word "Ghazwa" if the number of men sent exceeded to hundreds.

tions were intended to let not the trade caravans have a smooth sailing. As warned by Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, the object was to close the Syrian route for the Quraish. Adverse criticism interprets them as designed to train the Companions in loot and plunder. It is a charge based on sheer ignorance. In the first place Islam declares loot and plunder to be a heinous crime. Moreover, facts tell their own tale. There is not a single report on record to say that the Companions ever seized the merchandise of the caravan. Thirdly, if loot had been the object, the Meccan caravan should not have been the only target.

Of the several expeditions sent to the neighbouring tribes for patching up peace treaties the first was despatched to the tribe of Juhaina. They were settled at a distance of three marches from Medina, and their country was a long range of hills. It was settled with them that they would remain on equal terms with both the parties *i.e.*, take sides with neither.[1]

In the month of Safar in the second year of the Hijra, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set out from Medīna with sixty *Muhajirs* and reached a place known as Abwā', (near this place was fought the Ghazwa known as the Ghazwa of Abwā' or the Ghazwa of Waddān), a place where the Prophet's mother lay buried. The chief town of Abwā' was Farā', a populous place inhabited by the tribe of Muzaina. It was at a distance of 8 marches or 80 miles from Medina. This place marks the farthest boundary of the area appertaining to Medīna. In the neighbouring country was settled the tribe of Banū Dumra who were in possession of that piece of land. Here the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stayed for a few days,

1. Historians do not mention it separately. They speak of it in connection with the Sirya of Dumra, saying that Majdi, the chief of the tribe of Juhaina was on friendly terms with both the parties.

and concluded a treaty with the Banū Dumra, whose chief was Mukhshi[1] Ibn 'Amr Dumrī. The following was the text of the treaty[2] :

> "This is a document from Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh, for the people of Dumra. Their lives and property shall be secure, and they shall be helped against any invader (the promise to be binding at all times) except when they fight against a religious cause.[3] On their part they shall come to the help of the Prophet when called by him."

Traditionists treat this as the first Ghazwa. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* also calls it the first.

Nearly a month later, Kurz Ibn Jābir Fihrī, one of the chiefs of Mecca, attacked the pasture lands of Medīna and lifted some cattle belonging to the Prophet.[4] He was chased but made good his escape. (Later on this Kurz embraced Islam and was killed when passing alone along a street at the time of the Conquest of Mecca.)

Three months after this attack, *i.e.*, in the month of *Jamādī ul-Thānī*, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) left Medīna accompanied by 200 *Muhajirs* and stayed at a place known as Dhu'l—'Ashīra. Here a treaty was made with the Banū Mudlaj. This place lay at a distance of nine marches from Medīna near Yanbū'. The Banū Mudlaj had been the allies of the Banū Dumra ; the Banū Dumra had already entered into a treaty with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) so they readily

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1 Also read as Makhshi.

2. *Raud al-Anaf*, Vol. II, p. 58 and Zurqānī, Vol. I, p, 459.

3. The exception here, as in the agreement with the Jews, is strange. The 'Allama ought to have clarified it.—Translator.

4. *Isābah*, description of Kurz Ibn Fihrī.

accepted the same terms.[1]

A few days later, in the succeeding month of Rajab of the same year, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent 'Abdullah Ibn Jahash with twelve persons to a place known as Batn Nakhlah. It was situated midway between Mecca at Tā'if, a day and a night's journey each way. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had given 'Abdullah a letter and ordered him to open it after two days. When 'Abdullah opened it he found it containing instructions to stop at Nakhlah, reconnotire the movements of the Quraish and report accordingly. By chance a party of the Quraish returning from Syria with some merchandise passed that way. 'Abdullah Ibn Jahash attacked them. One of them 'Amr Ibn al-Hadrami was killed and two others captured with some booty. On return to Medīna 'Abdullah Ibn Jahash narrated the whole story to the Prophet and presented the booty. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reminded him that he had not been permitted to act like that and refused to accept the booty. The Companions were highly engaged and said, to Abdullah, "You did something for which you had no orders, and fought during the Prohibited month,[2] which you were not permitted to do." Those who were captured or killed were highly connected. 'Amr Ibn al-Hadramī was the

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1. I do not deny that historians have stated the aim of the first two expeditions to be plundering of the trade-caravans of the Quraish, and that the caravans escaped by chance. But I must stick to facts, as conjectures are not my business. That the Prophet went to these places and made peace-treaties is the whole fact. That the Prophet intended to attack the caravan is a mere surmise. If that was the intention of the Prophet, we cannot escape the inference that he was a tactless leader who repeatedly failed to catch up the caravan ; and that (God forbid) he conld not learn anything by experience for the caravan again managed to escape at Badr.

2. Tabari, p. 1275.

son of 'Abdullah Ibn Hadramī, an ally of Harb Ibn Umayya (the grand-father of Amīr Mu'āwiya). Herb was the leading chief of the Quraish and had succeeded 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib to an over all leadership.[1] Those captured, named 'Uthmān and Naufal were the ground-sons of Mughīra, the father of Walīd aud grand father of Khālid.[2] Mughīra stood next to Harb in power. The Batn Bakhla affair naturally, infuriated all the Quraish tribes and laid the foundation of a lasting blood feud. The battle of Badr was the outcome of this incident. 'Urwa Ibn Zubair' son of Asmā', sister of 'Ā'isha, declared that the root cause of all the battles with the Quraish, including that of Badr, was that Hadramī was slain in this skirmish. 'Allama Tabarī also concurs with this view in these words :

> "And the thing that caused the battle of Badr and all the subsequent battles between the Prophet and the unbelievers was the death of Hadramī at the hands of Wāqid Sehmī."[3]

The battle of Badr being the original cause of all the subsequent battles, we shall first give a simple summary of events and later on discuss it in detail.

1. *Isābah*, version of 'Ala, al-Hadramī.
2. Ṭabarī, p. 1274.
3. Tabarī, p. 1274.

THE BATTLE OF BADR

(Ramaḍān, 2 Hijra, *i.e.*, 623/24, C.E.)

"And God did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak ; be careful of your duty to God then, that you may give thanks." (13 : 122)

Badr is a village where a fair is held every years. Nearly eighty miles from Medīna, it lies close to the spot where the Syria-Medīna routs winds its way through difficult valleys.

As already said the Quraish had started preparations for an attack on Medīna, immediately after the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had left Mecca. They had written to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubayy to kill Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), else they would fall upon him and make an end of the Medīnites as well as the Prophet. Small parties of the Quraish had hovered round Medīna, and Kurz Fihrī had been bold enough to make off with some live-stock from the pasture-lands of the city.

The first thing necessary for an attack was enough money to bear the expenses of the expedition. Consequently, the trade caravan that left Mecca that spring was liberally financed, each Meccan investing whatever he had in cash.[1]

1. Ibn Sa'd, page 7 has mentioned Abū Sufyān, the chief of the caravan, as saying that among the Quraish men and women, possessing any amount of wealth, there was none who did not contribute as much as possible to them. Only historians care little for cause and their effects ; and so they have merely narrated this fact, they did not try to find out the reason why the whole of Mecca had invested all it had in this trip.

Not only men, but also women, who rarely did any business, contributed without a single exception. The caravan had not yet left Syria for homeward journey, when Hadramī was accidently slain. For the angry Quraish it had the effect of adding fuel to the fire. In the mean time a baseless rumour went round in Mecca that the Muslims were coming out to plunder the caravan. The Quraish now rose like an angry storm overwhelming all Arabia.

When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of it, he called Muslims together and informed them of the situation. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) and others expressed their readiness to lay down their lives, but the Holy Prophet's glance was turned towards the *Anṣār*. The *Anṣār* when they had first pledged their support had promised to unsheathe their swords only when the enemy fell upon Medīna. Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda, head of the tribe of Khazraj, rose to his feet and said to the Prophet, "Is it we you mean ? Then order us, and, by Allāh, we will jump into the sea."

This is the version of *Ṣaḥīh Muslim Bukharī* has it that Midqād told the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that they would not, like the followers of Moses, tell him to go with his God and do the fighting ; they would on the other hand, fight on his right and his left, in front and in the rear. At this speech the face of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) brightened up.

In short, on the 12th of Ramaḍān, on the 2nd year of the Hijra, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) marched out of the city with three hundred followers. They had gone about a mile, when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reviewed the Muslim army. Those who were too young were sent back[1] as situation like these were fraught with dangers and not meant for youngsters.

1. Ibn Sa'd, p. 6.

'Umair Ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, a child of tender age, was likewise told to return. He burst into tears and thus got the Prophet's permission. His brother, Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, himself hung a sword round his neck.[1] Now the total number was 313 out of which 60 were *Muhajirs* and the rest *Anṣārs*. The Jews and the Hypocrites at Medīna could not be trusted to remain loyal in the absence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ; so Abū Lubāba Ibn 'Abd al-Mundhir was appointed the Governor of Medīna and ordered to return back to the city. 'Āliyah (the elevated suburb of Medīna) was placed in charge of 'Āṣim Ibn 'Adī. After making these arrangements, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) proceeded towards Badr, the side from which the Meccans were reported to be coming. Two reporters..... Basbasah[2] and 'Adī.....had been sent in advance to bring news of the movements of the enemy. Passing by Rauhā', Munsarif, Dhat-Ajdhal, Ma'alāt and Athil, the Muslim army came to Badr on the 17th of Ramaḍān. The reporters brought the news that the Quraish had reached the other end of the valley. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stopped here and the army encamped.

The Quraish had set out from Mecca in full splendour of military equipment. They were a thousand strong besides a 100 cavalry men. All the grandees of the Quraish were present except Abū Lahab, who had been compelled to absent himself by an unavoidable circumstance. He had however, sent a substitute. Supplies were so abundant that the chiefs of the Quraish, as, 'Abbās Ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 'Utba Ibn Rabī'a, Hārith Ibn 'Āmir, Abū Jahl, 'Umayya and others slaughtered, each by turn, ten camels a day to feed the army.[3] 'Utba Ibn Rabī'a, the most honoured among them held the chief command.

1. *Muntakhab Kanz ul 'Ummal*, on the authority of Ibn 'Asakir.
2. Also read as Basbas Ibn 'Amr—Translator.
3. *Ma'ārif* Ibn Qaitaba & *Sīrat* Ibn Ishāque quoting from Ibn Hishām on Badr.

On reaching Badr the Quraish learnt that the caravan under Abū Sufyān had passed and was then out of danger. The men from the tribes of Zahra and 'Adī suggested that it was then needless to resort to fighting. But Abū Jahl would not agree. The Zahra and Banī 'Adī turned back, and the rest of the army moved on.

Having reached earlier, the Quraish occupied a favourable site. On the other hand the Muslims encampment had not even a well or spring, and the place was so sandy that the feet of the camels sank deep into it. Hubāb Ibn Mundhir asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) whether the choice of the camp had been made in obedience to a divine directive or in view of military exigency. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) told him that it was not because of a command from God. Then Hubāb suggested that it would be far better to move forward, and take possession of the spring and render the surrounding wells useless for the enemy. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) liked this suggestion and acted accordingly. By the grace of Allāh they were lucky enough to have a good rain, which caused the dust to settle down. Rain water was also collected in tanks at various places, so as to be serviceable for ablution and bath. It is to this favour of God that the Qur'ān refers when it say :

> "And when He sent down upon you water from the cloud that He might thereby purify you." (2 : 1)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had now in his possession the supply of water, but the universal benefactor, who will be dispensing the heavenly water of *Kaūthar*[1] in the Hereafter, was not willing to put limits to his bounties, and allowed the enemy free access.[2] It was

1. *Kaūthar* is the name of a stream in Paradise as mentioned in the Qur'ān—Translator.

2. Ibn Hishām, Vol. II, p. 16.

night and the Faithful put off their weapons and had a whole night's rest; only one man (the Prophet) kept awake, praying all the time. When day broke, the Muslims were called to congregational prayer, and the prayer was followed by a sermon on *Jihād*.[1]

The Quraish were thirsting for battle. Nonetheless, there were a few tender hearts who shuddered at the idea of blood-shed. One of them, Hakīm Ibn Hizām, who later on embraced Islam, went up to 'Utba, the Commander-in-Chief of the Quraish army, and said to him that eternal reputation could be his that day if he liked. 'Utba asked how it was possible. Hakīm replied that the main grievance of the Quraish was the murder of Hadramī, and as Hadramī was his ally he had better pay off his blood money. 'Utba, a good-natured man agreed. But Abū Jahl's approval had to be taken. Hakīm took 'Utba's message to Abū Jahl, who was laying out arrows from out of the quiver. "I see," said he, as the message was delivered to him, "'Utba's courage has failed him." Hudhaifa, the son of 'Utba had turned a Muslim and had come with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Abū Jahl suspected that 'Utba shrank from battle that no harm should come to his son.

Abū Jahl called Hadramī's brother, and said, "Do you see? The only chance to claim penalty for your brother's murder is slipping away from under your very nose". 'Āmir, according to the custom of the Arabs tore off his clothes, and completely nude from head to foot, started throwing up dust and shouting out "O 'Amrā! O, 'Amrā!" This set the whole army aflame.

'Utba was furious at the taunt of Abū Jahl, and retorted that the field of battle would tell which of them would come off with the blot of cowardice. Saying this he asked for a

1. *Muntakhab Kanz ul 'Ummāl*, Battle of Badr, on the authority of *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal and Ibn Abī Shaiba.

helmet. But his skull was so big for any helmet that could be found. As a last resort he wound a piece of cloth round his head and got himself armed.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) being averse to seeing his hands stained with blood, the Companions raised at one end of the field a shed of stones for him to stay there. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh stood at the entrance with a naked sword that none might dare to enter it.

Help and victory had been promised by God, the very elements were at work to aid the Muslims, the angels themselves were arrayed on their side ; yet acting humanly, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had to think of arranging his forces in order of battle. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair was appointed the flag bearer of the *Muhajirs*, Hubāb Ibn Mundhir of the Khazraj, and the standard of the Aūs was given to Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh.

Early in the morning the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was putting his forces in battle-array. With an arrow in his hand, he said to the Faithful to draw up in lines so that none should be out of place even by an inch. Noise is a common feature of battle-fields, but they were all forbidden to utter a single cry.

On this occasion, when the *Muhajirs* were pitted against overwhelming numbers, re-inforcement by a single person ought to have been welcome. But to keep the plighted word was as dear to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) as life itself. Two Companions, Hudhaifa Ibn al-Yamān and Abū Ḥusail had been off on a journey. On their way back they were stopped by the infidels under the belief that they were going to the help of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). They denied and promised not to take part in the fight. They reached the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and related the whole story ; the Prophet remarked that he would

honour their word in any case, and that he required no help but that of God.[1]

Now there were two forces face to face, truth against untruth, light against darkness, Islam against infidelity. The Qur'ān says :

> "Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts which met together in encounter, one party fighting in the way of God and the other unbelieving." (2 : 12)

A strange spectacle it was indeed ! The fate of Monotheism in this wide world depended on a few lives. The two authentic books of Hadīth report that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), in earnest devotion and with his hands out-stretched, was praying to Allāh in these words : "O' Allāh ! fulfil this day, Thy promise made unto me." So absorbed was he, and unconscious of himself, that his shroud would slip down from over his shoulders and he did not know it. Sometimes he would lay his forehead on the ground and pray : "O' Allāh, if this little band is wiped off this day, none shall ever worship Thee till the end of the world." His agony moved his friends to tears and Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) consoled him saying that Allāh would certainly fulfil His Promise. Ultimately, with a pacified soul, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) rose reciting :

> "Soon shall the host be routed, and they shall turn their backs." (2 : 45)

Thus did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) foretell the victory that was to come.

By this time the forces of the Quraish had drawn nearer, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered his Companions not to move forward but to check

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter "Al-Wafā al-'Ahid, Kitāb al-Jihād"—S.

the advancing enemy with their arrows when they got near enough.

This battle brought to view a unique scene of sacrifice and reckless valour. When the two armies met, warriors saw their own near and dear ones under the flash of their steel. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) stepped forward, a naked sword in hand, to engage his own son who had not come over to Islam upto that time.[1] When 'Utba came out, his Muslim son Hudhaifa advanced to meet him ; and the sword of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), was red with the blood of his maternal uncle.[2]

The battle started when 'Āmir Hadramī who claimed his brother's blood come out of the ranks. Mehja', a freed slave of 'Umar, went out to meet him and was killed.

'Utba, the chief in command, had been stung to the quick by the taunt of Abū Jahl. He came out of the line with his brother and son ; and called for an adversary. It was customary with men of repute among the Arabs to go out to the battlefield with a special mark of distinction. 'Utba had a feather of an ostrich stuck on his chest. 'Aūf, Mu'ādh and 'Abdullah Ibn Rawāha came out to meet the Quraish notables. 'Utba asked them their names ; and on learning that they were all *Anṣāris*, he said he had nothing to do with them. Then he called to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saying they (Mu'ādh and others) were not his equals.[3] The Prophet (peace and blessings of

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1. *Isti'āb*, description of 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Abī Bakr.

2. *Sīrat* Ibn Hisham, Muhammad Ali Press, Egypt, p. 381.

3. The words that occur in books of traditions are different. In *Abū Dāwūd*, Chapter on Jihād, we find that 'Utba said they were concerned with their cousins and not with them. The *Anṣār* traditionists do not take these words to mean an insult to the *Anṣār*.

[*Contd. on* p. 19

Allāh be upon him) asked *Anṣārs* to retire. Hamza, 'Ali and 'Ubaida (Allāh be pleased with them) took up the challenge. They had helmets over their faces and could not be recognized.[1] 'Utba asked who they were? They told him their names and parentage. "Yes", said 'Utba, "you are a match for us." 'Utba engaged Hamza, Walid came upon 'Ali and both the infidels were slain. But 'Utba's brother, Shaiba, wounded 'Ubaida. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) came up and did him to death. He lifted up 'Ubaida on his shoulders and brought him to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Ubaida (Allāh be pleased with him) asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) if he had earned martyrdom, the Prophet assured him that he was dying a martyr. "Had Abū Tālib been alive", said 'Ubaida (Allāh be pleased with him), "he would have admitted that I am the person to whom this couplet of his applies....."[2]

> "We shall not hand over Muhammad to the enemies till we die fighting and get separated from our wives and children."

'Ubaida, son of Sa'id Ibn al-'Āṣ, then came out of the ranks, clad in iron from head to foot. "I am Abū Kirsh", he cried. Zubair came forward to meet him. No part of 'Ubaida's body was visible except the eyes. Zubair aimed

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Contd. from p. 18]

They think the Quraish demanded revenge for blood from the Quraish. However, it goes without saying that the Meccans did not consider the *Anṣār* their equals. Authentic traditions report that when Abū Jahl was killed by an *Anṣāri*, he exclaimed with sorrow, "Oh, that I had been killed by any other than a peasent." The Quraish considered farming a mean profession and the *Anṣāris* carried on farming.

1. Ibn Sa'd, Ghazwa Badr and Bidaya wal Nihāya Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, p. 273, Cairo Edition.

2. Zurqānī, in this connection there are various reports and each is equally authentic, so whichsoever one likes one may choose.

his spear at eye and with one stroke, laid Abū Kirsh dead on the ground. The spear had sunk so deep that it came off only when Zubair pulled hard at it with his feet on the dead body ; but its ends had both got upturned. This spear was preserved as a relic. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) took it from Zubair (Allāh be pleased with him), it passed to each of the four Caliphs one after the other, ultimately coming into the possession of 'Abdullah Ibn Zubair.[1] Zubair received several wounds in this battle, the one of the shoulder being so deep that, when healed up, one could pass a finger into it, which was quite a fun for 'Urwa, the little son of Zubair. The sword with which he had fought had become all indented. When 'Abdullah Ibn Zubair (Allāh be pleased with him) was slain, 'Abd al-Mālik asked 'Urwa if he could recognize the sword. "Yes", was the reply. "How will you do it ?" again asked 'Abd al-Mālik. "I shall know it", said 'Urwa, "from the notches on the blade made in the battle of Badr." 'Abd al-Mālik testified to this statement and recited the line : "In them (the swords) are cuts resulting from strokes in the battle." Then 'Abd al-Mālik gave the sword to 'Urwa. 'Urwa had its price estimated and it was found to be worth three thousand ; its blade had silver work on it.[2]

Now started a general attack. The infidels were fighting confident of their strength, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on the other side, was seeking Divine help with his forehead on the ground.

Abū Jahl had been notorious for his mischief and hostility towards Islam. Mu'awwidh and Mu'ādh, two brothers from amongst the *Anṣār*, had consequently taken a vow to

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1. The whole story has been described in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Ghazwa Badr."

2. *Ibid.*

destroy thir accursed fellow whenever they could catch sight of him, or get themselves martyred.

'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn 'Aūf reported that he was at his post, when all of a sudden he saw the two young men coming up, one on his right and the other on his left. One of them whispered in his ear, "Where is Abū Jahl ?" "My good nephew", said 'Abd al-Raḥmān, "What business have you with Abū Jahl ?" "I have vowed to God," said the young man, "that whenever I happen to meet him, I will kill him or be killed myself." Before 'Abd al-Raḥmān could make a reply, the other youth was whispring to him the same words. 'Abd al-Raḥmān pointed to the place where Abū Jahl stood. That very instant the two swooped down on him like falcons and, Abū Jahl was grovelling in dust. These youths, Mu'awwidh and Mu'ādh, were the sons of 'Afra.[1] 'Ikrama, the son of Abū Jahl attacked Mu'ādh from behind and dealt a blow with his sword on the left shoulder, with the result that the arm was almost severed, and left dangling by a mere shred of muscle. Mu'ādh continued to fight in this mutilated condition ; but the dangling arm was causing trouble. Pressing the hand under a foot, he tore it off, and now he was free to move.

Before the commencement of the battle, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had said that, with the Quraish, there were many who had been forced to join the army against their will. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had even told their names, and Abū al-Bakhtarī was one of them. Mujdhar,[2] who was an *Anṣārī,* sighted Abū al-Bakhtarī and told him that, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) having ordered them to refrain from killing him, he would let him go. Abū al-Bakhtarī had a companion, and asked if protec-

1. Some reports have Mu'ādh Ibn 'Amr and Mu'ādh Ibn 'Afra.

2. Also pronounced as Mujadhdhar—Translator.

tion would be extended to his companion as well. Mujdhar refused. Abū al-Bakhtarī then said that he could not stand the taunt of the Quraish women that Bakhtarī left his companion in the lurch to save his own life. Then reciting a war song he attacked Mujdhar and was killed. The song said that a man of noble birth cannot desert a friend till he is himself put to death or his friend finds a way out.

On the death of 'Utba and Abū Jahl, the Quraish were shaken in their resolve and the army lost heart.

The arch-enemy of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), Umayya Ibn Khalaf had also joined the Quraish army. Sometime back, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn 'Aūf had promised him safety if he came to Medīna. The battle should have been a nice opportunity for the Muslims to be revenged upon this enemy of God. But to honour a pledge was the hall mark of the Muslim. 'Abd al-Raḥmān did his best to let Umayya make good his escape. He took him to a hill, but was detected by Bilāl who let the *Anṣār* know of it. In an instant some Muslims fell upon him. 'Abd al-Raḥmān pushed forward Umayya's sons to shield him, and he was slain. But the assailants were not satisfied and advanced towards Umayya himself. 'Abd al-Raḥmān asked him to lie down, and when he had done so, 'Abd al-Raḥmān bent down over him to protect him against attack. But the assailants reached out their hands from under the legs of 'Abd al-Raḥmān and despatched him. 'Abd al-Raḥmān himself was severely wounded in the leg which remained scarred for a long time.[1]

After the death of Abū Jahl, 'Utba and others, the Quraish laid down their arms. The Muslims now began taking them prisoners. 'Abbās, 'Aqīl (brother of 'Ali), Naufal,

1. All these details are given in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* but not in the Chapter of Maghāzī under the heading of "Wikālah." It is for this reason that the historians have overlooked it—S.

Aswad Ibn 'Āmir, 'Abdullah Ibn Zam'a and a host of other leading persons were captured.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked the Muslims to bring news how Abū Jahl had fared. 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd searched for him among the dead and found him struggling with death. "Is it you, Abū Jahl ?" asked 'Abdullah. "Is it" he retorted, "a matter for pride that a man has been killed by his own community."[1] Abū Jahl had once struck 'Abdullah with a stone. In a revengeful mood 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd placed his foot on his neck. "O goat-herds-man," cried Abū Jahl, "look, where thou placest thy foot." 'Abdullah cut his head off, brought it to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and placed it at his feet.[2]

Western historians, who can think only in terms of material causes and affects, are left wondering how a body of three hundred footmen could vanquish one thousand adversaries reinforced with a hundred horse. But Divine help has many a time worked wonders like that. Nevertheless, the mircale of Badr has much to satisfy even those who have no eyes but for externals. The Quraish were a disunited horde. 'Utba, the commander-in-chief was not agreeable to fighting, and the tribe of Zahrah had turned back from Badr. The rains had affected the battle-field in a manner that the site occupied by the Quraish had been rendered too muddy for moving to and fro. The Quraish were over-awed and miscalculated the number of the Muslims to be double of themselves, to which the Qur'ān refers in these words :

> "Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts that met, one host fighting in the way of Allāh, and the other disbelieving, beholding themselves, with their own eyes, twice as many as they." (3 : 13)

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Badr.
2. *Ibid.*

The Quraish had no order discipline, whereas, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), with an arrow in his hand, had personally arranged his men in lines. Again the Muslims had passed restful night and woke up fresh in the morning, while Quraish had been too perturbed to have a good sleep.

These may be ascribed as the causes that explain the event. They are however, accidents. How and why did they happen to so combine and coincide? This was the way help came from God. Comparing the Quraish and the Muslim armies, no military expert could expect a victory for the Muslims. The Quraish had wealth on their side, some of them feeding the entire force single-handed, the Muslims were penniless; the Quraish numbered one thousand, while the Muslims were only three hundred; the Quarish had a hundred horsemen, the Muslims had only two horses; very few Muslims had a full equipment or weapons, on the other hand, each of the Quraish was clad in steel from head to foot.

With all these odds against them, the Muslims found, at the end of the battle, that they had lost only fourteen, six *Muhajirs* and eight *Anṣāris*. On the other hand, the Quraish were crushed to the back-bone; and almost all the dignitaries who had led the tribes and had been reputed warriors were wiped off. Of these, Shaiba, 'Utba, Abū Jahl, Abū al-Baktarı, Zam'a Ibn al-Aswad, 'Āṣ Ibn Hisham, Umayya Ibn Khalaf, Munabbeh Ibn al-Hajjaj, were the cream of Meccans. About seventy men were killed and as many taken prisoners. Out of the seventy prisoners two, 'Uqbh and Nadr Ibn Hārith, were put to death and the rest brought to Medina as captives. The captives included 'Abbās, 'Aqīl and Abū al-'Āṣ, the second was the brother of 'Ali, and the third, the son-in-law of the Prophet.

It was usual with the Prophet, (peace and blessings of

Allāh be upon him) to get a dead body buried wherever he came across one. On this occasion the number was so great that it was difficult to bury them separately. He therefore, ordered the corpses to be thrown into a well that lay near-by. Only the dead body of Umayya which had got so sowllen that it could not be removed from the place was buried on the spot.[1]

The prisoners were brought before the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in Medīna, when Saūda, the wife of the Prophet, was also present. She saw Suhail Ibn 'Umar, a kinsman of hers, among the prisoners, and could not help saying: "You too have put fetters on your feet, like women. Could not you die fighting."[2]

The prisoners of war were distributed in twos and fours among the Companions, with instructions to look to their comfort. The Companions carried out the Prophet's wishes so faithfully that they offered their food to the prisoners, while they themselves had to be content with mere dates. Abū 'Azīz, the brother of Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair, was one of the prisoners. He says that the *Anṣāris* who had charge of him used to place bread before him while they themselves took date. He felt ashamed and forced it into their hands, but they would not even touch it and returned it to him. This was because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had ordered the Companions to treat the prisoners well.[3]

One of the captives was Suhail Ibn 'Amr, an eloquent speaker, who used to harangue against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in public. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) suggested to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to get two of his lower teeth pulled

1. *Raud al-Anaf.*

2. Ibn Hishām.

3. Tabarī, p. 1338.

out to rob him of his fine delivery. "If I disable him", replied the Prophet, "God may disable my limbs in return, though I am His Messenger."[1]

'Abbās had no shirt on. He was a tall man and no shirt could be found to fit his size. 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay, the prince of the Hypocrites, alone was equally tall and he made a present of his shirt. *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* says that it was to return this kindness that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), on the death of 'Abdullah, offered his own shirt for his dead body.[2]

It is generally reported that on reaching Medīna the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) consulted the Companions concerning the fate of the prisoners of war. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) was in favour of setting them free for ransom as all of them happened to be their own kith and kin. But in the opinion of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), Islam knew no kinship and they all deserved to be put to death—each to be slain by his own Muslim kinsman. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) approved the suggestion of Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) and the prisoners were set free on payment of ransom. At this step God expressed His displeasure and the following Verse was revealed :

> "Were it not that a writ had already gone forth from Allāh, there would surely have touched you a mighty torment for that which ye took." (8 : 67)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him), as the story runs, burst into tears at this admonition from God.

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1. Tabari, p. 1314.
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 422, Chapter "Kiswat al-Usāra" (Clothing the Prisoners).

This is a report found in almost every book of history and tradition. As to the cause of displeasure, however, there is a difference of opinion. The words in *Tirmidhī* lead one to conclude that upto that time there had been received no instructions regarding booty. The Companions, following the prevailing custom, had taken to collecting booty and thus incurred Divine displeasure. In the absence of a previous injunction in this respect, the offence was pardoned and the booty already seized declared legal. The Verse expressing displeasure is followed by the Verse which runs thus :

> "Eat ye then of that which ye have obtained of spoil lawful and clean, and fear Allāh, verily Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful." (8 : 69)

This Verse clarifies that what had come into the hands of the Muslims was made lawful ; and that was the booty they had procured ? In short, according to the versions of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Tirmidhi* the Divine displeasure was due to either the charging of ransom or the collecting of booty. In the words of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* when the Verse expressing God's displeasure was revealed, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) burst into tears ; and when 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) asked him the reason, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remarked : "I am shedding tears because of the displeasure of Allāh at the charging of ransom by your fellow Companions." Generally this Verse has been miscontrued, and the displeasure ascribed to having spared the lives of the prisoners ; to which the following Verse is believed to lend support :

> "It behoveth not a prophet that he should have captives until he hath greatly slaughtered in the land." (8 : 67)

But this Verse is really intended to prohibit taking prisoners before there takes place a good deal of fighting. It does not yield the conclusion that prisoners taken before shedding of blood have to be put to death after the battle is over.

In short each prisoner was charged 4,000 Dirhams. Those who were too poor to pay were set free without any ransom, and those who knew how to write were asked to teach it to ten Muslims children in lieu of their ransom.[1] Zaid Ibn Thābit learnt writing under this arrangement.[2]

The *Anṣār* offered to forgo the ransom for 'Abbās as he was their nephew on the mother's side. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not like this preferential treatment and 'Abbās too had to pay. The ransom charged was generally fixed at 4,000 Dirhams, but the wealthy were made to pay more. 'Abbās was rich and consequently, he was asked to pay a larger sum. He complained to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him); he could not understand that the principle of equality established by Islam made no difference between man and man —kinsman or no kinsman, plebian or patrician, were all alike.[3] (But with this scrupulous sense of duty and equality, the Prophet, had that feeling heart which made sleep impossible when 'Abbās groaned at night. Only when people had undone the knot, the Prophet could sleep.)[4]

The son-in-law of the Prophet, Abū al-'Āṣ, was also among the prisoners of war. He had no money to pay. He sent word to his wife, Zainab, the daughter of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who was at Mecca to send him the money. When Zainab had been given in marriage, Khadīja, the wife of the Prophet, had bestowed on her a valuable necklace as part of dowry. Along with the sum of money Zainab sent that necklace as well. The Prophet (peace

1. *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal, Vol. I, p. 247.
2. *Tabaqāt* Ibn Sa'd, p. 14.
3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. I, Book al-Maghāzī, p. 572.
4. As clarified by Sayyid Sulaiman, the compiler of this volume, the ropes of all the prisoners were loosened; not of 'Abbas alone— Translator.

and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was moved to tears when he saw that token of love presented twenty-five years back. He asked the Companions if they would consent to return to the daughter the relic of a dead mother. They most willingly nodded assent and the necklace was returned.[1]

Being set free, Abū al-'Āṣ reached Mecca and sent Zainab to Medīna. Abū al-'Āṣ was a tradesman. A few years later he set out for Syria with a good deal of merchandise. On the way back, he fell into the hands of a party of Muslims, who took possession of his merchandise ; and divided it among themselves. Abū al-'Āṣ stole away to Zainab, and she gave him shelter. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) requested the people who had attacked him to return his merchandise, if they pleased. They gave a ready consent, and returned everything they had seized. Now this was a stroke that was sure to hit. Abū al-Āṣ reached Mecca, cleared his accounts with his partners and turned a Muslim. He told the Meccans that he had come to Mecca and settled his accounts with them so that they might not accuse him of having turned a Muslim to evade their demands for payment of their money.[2]

The news of the rout at Badr reached Mecca and there was wailing and weeping in every house. Touched with shame, the Quraish had it announced that no lamentations would be permitted. Aswad had lost three sons but the sense of national honour did not allow him to shed a single tear. One day he heard some crying and wailing and thought that the Quraish had perhaps allowed it. "Go," he said to his servant, "See who is weeping. Has that been permitted? My bosom is all on fire. Could I but cry my grief out ; it would be a relief to me." The servant came back with the news that a woman was weeping for a lost camel, and spon-

1. Tabarī, p. 348 and Abū Dāwūd.

2. *Ibid.*

taneously the following lines fell from his lips :

> "She weeps for the loss of a camel and can't sleep. Oh, weep not for a camel. Shed thy tears on Badr where fate failed us. If thou hast to weep, then weep for 'Aqīl, weep for Hārith who was a lion among the lions."

'Umair Ibn Wahb was deadly hostile to Islam. With Ṣafwān Ibn Umayya sitting by his side at a place called Ḥujr, 'Umair was lamenting the fate of those who had fallen in the battle of Badr. "By God," exclaimed Ṣafwān, "Life has lost all its relish now." "Right you are," said 'Umair, "had I not been in debt or encumbered with children, I would have ridden to Medīna and killed Muhammad. My son is a prisoner there !" "Care not for your debts or your children," replied Ṣafwān, "I will look to all your affairs." 'Umair went home, dipped his sword in poison and reached Medīna. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), having read his intentions from his face, caught hold of his neck and brought him to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). "Let off his neck," said the Prophet, and then turned to 'Umair saying, "Get nearer. What is the object of your visit ?" "I have come," said 'Umair, "to plead for the release of my son." "Why then are you armed with a sword ?" the Prophet asked. "Swords were of no avail at Badr," came the reply. "Why ! Did not, you and Ṣafwān sitting at Ḥujr hatch a plot to kill me," answered the Prophet. 'Umair was stunned at the disclosure of his secret and exclaimed "O Muhammad, verily you are a Prophet. By God, none except Ṣafwān and myself knew of this affair." The Quraish who should have heard of the murder of the Prophet, were now served with the news of 'Umair's conversion.[1]

'Umair, the brave, now a Muslim, returned to Mecca, the Mecca of which the very sands were at this time thirsting

1. All these details are there in Tabarī, quoting 'Urwa Ibn Zubair, p. 1354.

for Muslim blood. On reaching Mecca, he started preaching Islam and many a damned soul got the light through his labours.

The Battle of Badr spoken in the Qur'ān

One of the distinguishing features of this battle is that God speaks of it at full length in the Qur'ān which devotes a whole chapter, entitled "*Anfāl*," to the favours shown at Badr and the various other issues connected with it. There is no source under the sky, more authentic and reliable than that, to bring to light the true facts. The Chapter runs thus :

> "The believers are only those whose hearts thrill with fear when Allāh is mentioned, and when His revelations are rehearsed unto them, they increase their faith and who trust in their Lord. Who established prayer and who expend of that wherewith We have provided them. Those : it is they who are the true believers. For them are degrees with their Lord and forgiveness and a provision honourable. This is like what time thy Lord had caused thee to go forth from thy house for a right cause, while a party among the believers were averse. Disputing with thee respecting the right cause after it had become manifest, as though they were led forth unto death while they looked on. And recall what time Allāh was promising you one of the two parties that it should be yours, and ye would fain have that the one without arms were yours ; whilst Allāh be-sought to justify the truth by His words and to cut off the root of the infidels. In order that He might justify the truth and falsify the false even though the guilty ones were averse. And recall what time ye implored your Lord and He answered you : verily I am about to succour you with a thousand of angels rank. And Allāh made not this save as a glad tidings, and that your hearts might thereby be set at rest ; and

succour cometh not but from Allāh. Verily Allāh is Mighty, Wise. Recall what time He caused slumber to cover you as a security from Himself, and He sent down rain upon you from heaven that He might cleanse you thereby and that He might gird up your hearts and make your feet firm thereby. And recall what time thy Lord inspired the angels : Verily I am with you, so keep firm those who have believed : I will cast horror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved ; so smite them above the necks and smite of them every fingertip. This, because they have resisted Allāh and His Apostle, and whosoever resisteth Allāh and His Apostle, then verily Allāh is severe in retribution. This ! taste it then, and know that for the infidels is the torment of the Fire. O ye who believe ! whenever ye meet those who disbelieve marching slowly turn them not your backs. And whosoever turneth his back to them on such a day, unless it be swerving to a fight or wriggling round to another company, hath surely drawn upon himself indignation from Allāh, and his resort is Hell—an evil destination ! Wherefore ye slew them not, but Allāh slew them, and thou threwest not, when thou threwest, but Allāh in order that He might test the believers by a fair test from Him. Verily Allāh is Hearing, Knowing. Thus ! And know that Allāh weakeneth the contrivance of the infidels. If ye be sought a judgment, then surely a judgment hath come unto you. And if ye desist, it will be better for you and if ye return, We will return ; and your host shall avail you not, although numerous it be, and know that verily Allāh is with the believers."

(8 : 2-19)

"And know that whatsoever ye obtain of spoils then verily unto Allāh belongeth a fifth thereof and unto the Apostle and unto his kindred and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer if ye indeed have believed in

Allāh and that which We sent down on Our bondman on the day of distinction, the day whereon the two hosts met. And Allāh is over everything Potent. And recall what time ye were on the hither side and they were on the yonder side and the caravan below you. And if ye had mutually appointed ye would surely have failed the appointment. But the action was so brought about in order that Allāh may decree an affair already enacted, so that he who was to perish, should perish after an evidence and he who was to remain alive may remain alive after an evidence. And verily Allāh is Hearing, Knowing. And recall what time Allāh shewed them few unto thee in thy dream. And had He shewn them numerous unto thee surely ye would have flagged and surely ye would have disputed over the affair ; but Allāh saved you. Verily He is the knower of that which is in the breasts. And recall what time He shewed them few in your eyes when ye met and lessened you in their eyes in order that Allāh might decree an affair already enacted ; and unto Allāh are all affairs returned. O ye who believe ! when ye meet a party, stand firm and remember Allāh much, that haply ye may fare well. And obey Allāh and His Apostle, and dispute not, lest ye flag and your predominence depart ; and be patient. Verily Allāh is with the patient. And be not like unto those who came forth from their homes vaunting and to be seen of men and hindering others from the way of Allāh ; and Allāh is the Encompasser of that which they work. (8 : 41-47)

"It behoveth not a prophet that he should have captives until he hath greatly slaughtered in the land. Ye seek the gear of the world, while Allāh seeketh the Hereafter, and Allāh is Mighty, Wise. Were it not that a writ had already gone forth from Allāh, there would surely have touched you a mighty torment for that which ye took ? Eat ye then of that which ye have obtained

of spoil, lawful and clean, and fear Allāh ; verily Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful." (8 : 66-69)

"O Prophet ! say unto the captives who are in your hands : if Allāh knoweth any good in your hearts He will give you better than that which hath been taken away from you, and shall forgive you ; and Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful. And if they seek defrauding thee, then they have defrauded Allāh before, yet He gave thee power over them ; and Allāh is Knowing, Wise."

(8 : 70, 71)

"And assuredly Allāh had succoured you at Badr while ye were humble. Wherefore fear Allāh that haply ye may return thanks." (3 : 23)

A REVIEW OF THE BATTLE OF BADR

Having given a bare description of events, we now proceed to a critical examination of the question whether the battle of Badr was a defensive measure against the Quraish or, as generally stated by historians, a high-way robbery directed against a trade-caravan.

I know there is a difference between history and a court of law, and that history narrates its facts not quite in the same manner as a court of law adopts to write down its verdict. I also admit that my duty is to narrate facts and not to write down a judgment. But there is an occasion when a historical event has assumed the nature of a law suit, and I am forced to deviate from the usual style and deal with the issues on the lines of a legal judgment.

In doing so, I fear naught if all the historians and biographers stand arrayed against me. It shall soon be evident that truth, single-handed, may conquer a host. In order to ensure continuity in the line of thought, we must first tell our readers what, (in the light of our researches) was the real situation.

The fact is that the whole of Mecca was crying for revenge at the death of Hadramī. This had led to petty skirmishes and each party was living in dread of the other. As usual in such circumstances, rumours take wing. At this time Abū Sufyān travelled to Syria at the head of a big trade caravan. He was still in Syria when a rumour was bruited abroad that the Muslims were planning an attack on the caravan. Abū Sufyān despatched a messenger post-haste to Mecca to inform

the Quraish, and Quraish started making preparations for war. In Medīna it was believed that the Quraish were bringing up a huge army to attack the city. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) decided to take defensive measures ; and thus took place the battle of Badr.

In order to decide the issue, let us first state the principles uncontroversially accepted by all of us. They will serve as established fundamentals in the progress of our discussion. They are as follows :

1. If a fact has been described by the Qur'ān in clear words, no contradictory report, from whatosever source, shall be deemed reliable.
2. Due regard shall be paid to the grade of authenticity in which each book on traditions has been generally placed.

It is generally agreed that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know that the Quraish had set out from Mecca with great preparations, he turned to the Companions and sought their views. The *Muhajirs* were highly enthusiastic in volunteering themselves; but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was anxious to know if the *Anṣār* were willing. Sa'd or some other respectable *Anṣārī* realised the situation and stood up, and thus addressed the Prophet : "Is it we you mean ? We are not the sort of people who had told Moses to go himself with his God and carry on the fight, while they would sit where they were. By Allāh, if you order us, we will plunge down into sea or fire."

It is also agreed that there were some of the Companions who hesitated to take part in the battle. The Holy Qur'ān says :

"Though a party among the believers were averse."

(8 : 5)

Historians and traditionists generally accounted for the Prophet's anxiety to know the views of the *Anṣār*, by reference to the promise given by them at the time of *Bai'at* (oath of allegiance) at Mecca. There the *Anṣār* had promised to oppose the enemy if Medīna itself was attacked. They were not pledged to give battle out of Medīna. The crucial point in our controversy is the location of the place where the consultations took place. Historians say that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had mind to attack the trade caravan when he first set out from Medīna, but when he had gone a distance of a few stages he came to know of the approach of the Quraish army. It was then and there that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called the *Anṣār* and the *Muhajirs* to ascertain their views. All that followed took place here. But, transcending the writers on *Sīra* (biography) or any other source whatsoever, we have the testimony of the Qur'ān, which we must all accept in humble submission. The Qur'ān says :

> "This is like what time the Lord had caused thee to go forth from thy house for a party among the believers were averse. Disputing with thee respecting the right cause after it had become manifest, as though they were led forth unto death while they looked on. And recall what time Allāh was promising you one of the two parties that it should be yours, and ye would fain have that the one without arms were yours ; whilst Allāh besought to justify the truth by His words and to cut off the root of the infidels." (8 : 7)

According to the rules of Arabic grammar, the *Wa'ū* "واؤ" occurring in the phrase "*Wa Inna*" in the above passage is "واؤ حالیہ" "*Wa'ū Hāliyah*" or consequential, which makes the flinching of a group from battle, a simultaneous occurrence with the setting out of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) from Medina and not with a later time when he had marched off some stages. *Wa'ū Hāliyah*

"واؤ حاليه" or the consequential *Wa'ū* "واؤ" denotes that the time when they hesitated was no other than the time they were coming out of their houses.

2. The foregoing Verse clearly indicates that it was a time when the Muslims could expect either the trade caravan or the army coming from Mecca. Historians allege that it speaks of the time when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had reached Badr. But we know that by the time the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reached Badr, the trade caravan had safely passed off. In these circumstances how could God promise to place at their disposal one of the two—the trade caravan or the Quraish army. Thus it is evident that according to the Qur'ānic Verse the consultations were held at a time when either of the two could be attacked that is, the time when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was still at Medīna and when a trade caravan was reported to be on the road under Abū Sufyān, while a Quraish army fully equipped for battle, on the march from Mecca.

3. Another point that deserves to be noted is that, of the two bodies of infidels spoken of in this Verse, one is the trade caravan and the other a force splendid and equipped *Ghair Dhāt Shaukatah* "غير ذات شوكة", namely the Quraish army advancing from Mecca to give battle. The Verse also clarifies that a section of the Muslims were in favour of an attack on the caravan, which God disapproved in these words :

> "And you would fain have that the one without arms were yours; whilst Allāh besought to justify the truth by His words and to falsify the false even though the guilty ones were averse." (8 : 4)

On one side are those who want to attack the caravan and on the other is God Who wills to establish the truth with

His word and uproot infidelity altogether. Which side would the Holy Prophet take ? I shudder at the thought of the answer to this question, if it should accord with the statements of our historians and traditionists.

4. Let us now consider another aspect. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is marching out of Medīna with the best force he could muster. Three hundred *Muhājirs* and *Anṣār* he commands—including 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him), the future victor of Khaibar, and Amīr Hamza, the top-most warrior, each of whom is by himself a match for a whole army. With all that (as is clearly mentioned in the Qur'ān) some of the Companions feel their hearts sinking for fear as though they were being driven into the jaws of death. The Qur'ān says :

> "While a party among the believers were averse. Disputing with thee respecting the right cause after it had become manifest, as though they were led forth unto death." (8 : 4, 5)

If the object was merely to attack the trade caravan, why then this fear, this fidgety feelings, this evasive attitude. Many a time before this, as the historians report, batches of men had been despatched to pillage the caravans. None of them had ever been injured. Why should this particular caravan inspire so great a fear that a good many of them, in spite of their numbers, are seen drooping down unnerved ? Decidedly it proves that the approach of a huge army had been reported to the Muslims before they left the city.

5. The Holy Qur'ān has yet another Verse regarding this affair. It was revealed at the time when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was still in Medīna as expressly reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Commentary on *Sūra Nisā* or the Women). The Verse runs thus :

> "Not equal are the holders back among the believers, save those who are disable and the strivers in the way of

Allāh with their riches and their lives. Allāh hath preferred in rank the strivers with their riches and their lives above the holders-back, and unto all Allāh hath promised good." (4 : 95)

Sahīh al-Bukhārī quotes here comment of Ibn 'Abbās who said that those who did not participate in the battle could not be equated with those who participated. *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* adds that the Verse when first revealed made no exception in case of those suffering from physical disability. 'Abdullah Ibn Maktūm, when the Verse was reported to him, came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with a request to be excused as he had lost his eyesight. Then and there the words "except those who are disable" were revealed to be appended. This makes it certain that while still at Medīna the Muslims had come to know that they were going not to attack a trade caravan, but to measure swords and lay down their lives.[1]

6. Regarding the Quraish infidels who came from Mecca to fight at Badr, the Holy Qur'ān says :

"And be not like unto those who came forth from their homes vaunting and to be seen of men and hindering others from the way of Allāh ; and the Allāh is the Encompasser of that which they work." (8 : 47)

Next to the Qur'ān is the status of the *Hadīth*. A number of books on traditions give a brief or detailed description of Badr. Barring the report narrated on the authority of Ka'b Ibn Mālik, I did not come across, in my study of these books, a single report saying that the Prophet (peace and blessings

1. All these arguments are useless. Sayyid Sulaimān himself realised his mistake in not treating Ka'b as a trustworthy narrator. He in his preface to the fifth edition of this volume has expressed his sincerest repentance for what he has written here and in the coming lines—Translator.

of Allāh be upon him) had set out for Badr in order to intercept the trade-caravan. The report of Ka'b Ibn Mālik is worth discussing in the light of the following facts :

1. Ka'b Ibn Mālik himself had not been a participant in the battle of Badr, hence he does not report from personal observation.

2. The motive behind the report is to under-estimate the importance of Badr so that he might forgive himself for his absence. That it was an eventful encounter may best be judged from the fact that the Qur'ān called it the "Day of Proof or Decision", and promised absolution from sins to those who took part in it. The participants in this battle were always highly honoured, and received the highest pensions in the days of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him). To be called a Badrī (participant in the battle of Badr) was a special mark of honour.[1]

The report of Ka'b Ibn Mālik is as follows :

"From Ka'b who says : I never kept away from accompanying the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in any battle except that of Tabūk and the Ghazwa of Badr, the which too I missed and no displeasure was shown to any who did not join it for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had set out in search of the caravan, but God brought the two forces face to face unexpectedly."

Against this there is a report on the authority of Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) mentioned by *Muslim*. It runs thus :

1. Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) reported that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon

1. *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, Chapter "Fadīlat Shāba."

him) came to know of the approach of Abū Sufyān, he held consultations and sought advice. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) spoke, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was not attentive to him. Then 'Umar, (Allāh be pleased with him) followed Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was again not attentive. Then Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda stood up and asked if the Prophet wanted to know their views. On oath he declared that if he ordered them to jump with their horses into a river, they would do it, and if he ordered them to go up to Bark al-Ghammād, they would go. Anas said that on hearing these words the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) invited people to take part in the battle. They started and stopped at Badr.

2. The first to arrive was an advance party of the Quraish, which included an Abyssinian slave of Banī Hajjāj. The Muslims arrested him and asked him the whereabouts of Abū Sufyān. He said he knew not where Abū Ṣufyān was, he could only say that Abū Jahl, Shaiba and Umayya Ibn Khalaf were coming. At this he was beaten again and would again promise to give a clue. But again when they stopped beating him, he said that he knew nothing of Abū Sufyān, but that Abū Jahl and the other chiefs were coming. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was offering prayers and had to intervene saying. "By God who has my life at His mercy, when he tells a lie you leave him."[1]

The first part of this report says that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ghazwa Badr.

the approach of Abū Sufyān, he consulted the Companions and desired help from the *Anṣār*. Now it is agreed on all hands that Abū Sufyān's arrival had become known in Medīna.

It follows that Medīna was the place where the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sought help from the *Anṣār*. Had this taken place outside Medīna, as mentioned in books on *Sīra*, how could the *Anṣār* be there ? The same part of the report says that after having consulted his Companions, the Prophet (peace and blesssings of Allāh be upon him) invited the people to battle. If the version of the books on *Sīra* be accepted then the order of events would be that the *Anṣār*, contrary to their custom and promise, first marched out to take part in the fighting, then the Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ascertained their views, and then he asked them to join the battle—obviously an insane statement.

The second part of the report clearly indicates that through revelation or some other source, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had come to know that it was not the trade-caravan they had to face but a force of fighting men. It is quite possible that other people might have not known it.

In this report there is yet another knot to be undone. If the Muslims had the knowledge of the approach of Abū Sufyān and knew nothing of the Quraish army, why would the Prophet be at pains to call in the entire Muslims strength. If the narration of facts, instead of beginning with the "On hearing of the approach of Abū Sufyān", had been with "On knowing of the approach of the infidels of Mecca", that would have been more in keeping with the circumstances. Imām Ahmad Ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*[1], Ibn Abī Shaiba in

1. *Musnad*, Vol. 1, p. 117.

his *Musannaf*,[1] Ibn Jarīr in *Tarīkh*[2] and Baihaqī in his *Dala'il* have all recorded the event with the words substituted as above and also declare it to be the correct version reported by the hero of Badr, the lion-hearted 'Alī Ibn Abī Tālib (Allāh be pleased with him). "On the authority of 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him) who says that when we came to Medīna, we got fruits to eat and they did not agree with us. We fell ill. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would often inquire about Badr. When we got the news that the infidels were coming, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set out for Badr. Badr is the name of a well and here we reached before the arrival of the infidels."

This version clearly states that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had set out, when he had been informed of the advance of the Quraish and that he ordered a halt when he had come to Badr. This report makes no mention of the trade caravan.

With these texts before us no further argument is called for. The following facts may, however, serve to set at rest doubts, if any :

1. All the expeditions sent from time to time by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to harass the caravans of the Quraish had comprised from twenty to two hundred men, but none of them had ever included a single *Anṣārī*. The historians explicitly mention this fact and feel called upon to do so, as the *Anṣār* had not committed themselves to fight outside Medīna. Consequently, it is obvious that the *Anṣār* should not have been there with the Muslim army in case it had merely aimed at falling upon a

1. *Muntakhab Kanz al-'Ummāl*, Ghazwa Badr.

2. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1289.

a trade-caravan. On the contrary we find that the *Anṣār* constituted the major portion of the Muslim force on this occasion—out of 305 only 74 being the *Muhajirs*, and the rest *Anṣār*. This is then a conclusive argument establishing the fact that the Quraish had already been reported to be making for Medīna before the Muslims moved from the city. It was for this reason that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) addressed the *Anṣār* for it was now time to utilize their services.

2. The caravan route to Syria passed close by Medīna. The tribes living between Mecca and Medīna were mostly under the domination of the Quraish. On the other hand the Quraish had no influence over the tribes living between Medīna and Syria. If the trade-caravan had been the target, the Muslims ought to have advanced towards Syria. That the caravan was coming from Syria and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was in the know of the fact, yet he marched out in the direction of Mecca, instead of going towards Syria, only to learn that the caravan had made its escape and he was to measure swords with the Quraish, is simply unthinkable.

3. The chronological order of events is this :

(*a*) The Quraish wrote to 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay that they should turn Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and his Companions out of Medīna or they would come to Medīna and destroy them all. (already mentioned on the authority of *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd).

(*b*) Abū Jahl told Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh that he had given shelter to their enemies, and if he had not been promised protection by Umayya Ibn Khalaf, he would have killed Sa'd.

(c) Kurz Ibn Jābir raided the grazing fields belonging to the Medīnites in Jamādī al-Thānī of the 2nd year of the Hijra ; and made off with the Prophet's camels.

4. Next month the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) deputed 'Abdullah Ibn Jahsh to watch and report the movement of the Quraish.

5. 'Abdullah Ibn Jahsh, against the directions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), pillaged a small caravan of the Quraish, killing one and taking two of them prisoners. Let us keep in view all that the Quraish had done to the Muslims in Mecca, and note that their craving for revenge had known no abatement. They had written to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay that they would come to Medīna and destroy them and the Prophet both ; and then Kurz Fihrī had attacked the pasture lands of Medina. Then 'Abdullah Ibn Jahsh attacked their caravan and two of their dignitaries were taken prisoner, which was adding fuel to fire. But the Quraish put up with all that and did not think of any sort of revenge. Only when the Prophet comes out to loot their caravan which carries the entire investment of the Meccans, do they feel forced to come out for defence. Even then at a short distance from Badr, when they come to know of the safe passage of the caravan, their leaders, including the Commander-in-Chief, 'Utba, suggest that it is no use fighting and they had better turn back. Is this presentation of facts in keeping with the revengeful spirit of the Quraish, or does it do credit to a Prophet's character as a Messenger of God ?

6. Most of the historians state that people did not show much enthusiasm when they were asked to advance against the caravan. Then thought it was neither a

true battle nor a religious war, but simply a bid for booty : hence only those who sought material gain joined the expedition. But facts point the other way. Leading personalities and warriors of note among the *Anṣār* were out to a man. Need and indigence, if there was any, was to be met with among *Muhājirs* ; but the *Anṣār* were twice as many as the *Muhājirs*.

7. Those who came forward with a willing response to the call of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) included Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Miqdād (Allāh be pleased with them), from the *Muhājirs*, and Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda from amongst the *Aṣnār*.[1] Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda could not participate in the battle of Badr and was unable to leave Medīna. Thus it must be concluded that Sa'd made his reply in Medīna where it was already known that the Quraish were on the march for an attack. The fact that the consent of the people was sought at Medīna follows as a logical corollary.

8. The assertions that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not meet with a unanimous response when he called upon people to start for Badr, that there were some who flinched from it as they knew that it was not a religious war, but only a raid for plunder, and so they were free to go or stay back, are not confined to histories ; some books on traditions tell the same tale. Tabarī has it in these words :

"People have reported that when the Prophet heard of Abū Sufyān's departure from Syria, he called the Muslims and informed them that a caravan of the

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Badr.

Quraish, was coming laden with the wealth of the Quraish, and he asked them to proceed in its direction for God might perhaps grant them something out of it as booty. People evinced their readiness, but some of them shrunk from it, thinking that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would not have to fight there."[1]

This statement contradicts the explicit text of the Qur'ān, which says that those who felt disinclined did so, not because they were not needy, but because they saw death staring them in the face. The words are :

"And a party among the believers were averse. Disputing with thee respecting the right cause after it had become manifest, as though they were led forth unto death while they looked on." (8 : 5, 6)

9. The books on tradition and history all say that a mile away from Medīna (at a place known as Bī'r Abi-Ghabah) the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reviewed the Muslim army and ordered 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar and others to return back as they were below fifteen years or had not attained majority. Had it been the object to raid the caravan, the youngsters should have done it better. In fact they had a religious war on hand, which was a sacred duty, obligatory only for adults. Minors were therefore, ordered back as ineligible for it.

10. Hāfiz Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, in *Istī'āb*,[2] reports that on the occasion when the Prophet (peace and blessings

1. Tabari, p. 1293.

2. *Istī'āb*, description of Sa'd Ibn Khaithama. *Isābah* and *Tabaqāt* too have these details with a slight difference in wordings.

of Allāh be upon him) advised the Muslims to attac the Quraish, Khaithama, an *Anṣāri*, asked his son, Sa'd, to let him go, while he (Sa'd) should stay there to look after the women. "Respected Sir," said the son, "I should have surely given you precedence over myself on any other occasion, but here is a chance for martyrdom ; I will not forego this privilege." They had to draw lots and Sa'd won. He went to the battle and was killed. This makes it decidedly certain that it was going to be a religious war, not a highway-man's business; they were coveting the honour of martyrdom.

The Real Cause of the Ghazwa of Badr

It was the characteristic of Arab race to start a bloody war whenever a man from a certain tribe got killed at the hands of another. Huge hosts swarmed up from both sides and blood ran in streams. These wars continued for years, whole tribes were destroyed ; but the fighting knew no end. The Arabs were not generally literate, yet the name of the murdered person was preserved, written down on a piece of paper, and passed on to succeeding generations. Little children were taught to remember it so that they might take a revenge when they grew up. The horrible wars of Dāhis and Basūs, each of which continued for almost forty years and claimed thousands of lives, were fought for no other reasons. The Arabic word for such a revenge was "*Thar*", (ثأر) a word that looms large in the national history of the Arabs.

As already mentioned, 'Amr Ibn Hadramī had been slain in an encounter with 'Abdullāh Ibn Jahsh. Hadramī was an ally of 'Utba Ibn Rabī'a, and 'Utba was the chief of the whole Quraish community. Badr, and all the battles that followed, were in consequence of revenge for this man's death. 'Urwa Ibn Zubair, the son of 'Ā'isha's sister, has explicitly stated it in

these words : "The cause that led to Badr and all the battles fought between the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the infidels of Arabia, was, as stated by 'Urwa Ibn Zubair, the death of 'Amr Hadramī, who was slain by Wāqid Ibn 'Abdullāh Tamīmī.[1]

A general mistake that leads to a fallacious view of facts is the presumption that Badr was the first battle fought against the infidels. As a matter of fact several engagements had actually preceded it. 'Urwa Ibn Zubair wrote a letter to 'Abd al-Malik, the opening sentence of which was : 'Abū Sufyān Ibn Harb was coming from Syria with seventy riders all of whom were Quraish." This was reported to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and his Companions. Hostilities had already broken out between the two parties, and a few persons from the other party including Ibn Hadramī had been slain and some taken prisoners.....And this had been the event that had led to war between the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the Quraish. This had also been the first occasion when losses were mutually inflicted ; and this encounter had taken place before Abū Sufyān departed for Syria."[2]

The best way to arrive at the truth is to see what the other side has to say. Such evidence is rarely found, but fortunately, it is available in this case. Hakīm Ibn Hizām (a nephew of Khadīja), who was still an unbeliever had come with the Quraish army. He was five years older than the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and had

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1. 'Abdullāh Ibn Jahsh under whose leadership this expedition was sent, was the son of Hamza's sister and a cousin of the Prophet on the mother's side. The man who had slain Hadramī was Wāqid Ibn 'Abdullāh Tamīmī, who was an ally of 'Umar's family and lived till the early days of 'Umar's Caliphate. Vide *Tabaqāt*, account of 'Abdullāh Ibn Jahsh and Wāqid Ibn 'Abdullāh Tamīmī.

2. Tabarī, p. 1285.

been friendly to him in the pre-ministry days and continued to be so even when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had entered upon his mission. However he did not embrace Islam till the conquest of Mecca. Ibn Hakīm was a Quraish dignitary, held the office of Rifāda, and owned and managed Dar al-Nadwa.[1] He lived till the days of the caliph Marwān Ibn Hakam. Once he went to see Marwān, who received him with great honour. Marwān left his royal seat, sat by his side and asked him to relate the events of Badr. Having described the preliminary details, he said, "When the Quraish had encamped, I went to 'Utba and said to him, 'O' father of Walīd, won't you like to win a life-long fame ?' 'How is it possible ?' asked 'Utba, and I answered, 'You see, the Quraish demand from Muhammad nothing more than blood for the blood of Hadramī, and he was your ally. Why don't you pay his blood-money yourself and let all your people march back home-ward.'[2] 'Utba liked this proposal, but Abū Jahl did not consent to it. Abū Jahl called 'Āmir Hadramī, the brother of the deceased Hadramī, and said that he should stand out and invoke the aid of the nation, for he had his chance of vengeance close at hand. According to Arab custom, 'Āmir Hadramī cast off his clothes and cried, 'Oh 'Amr Hadramī, Oh, 'Amr Hadramī, Oh 'Amr Hadramī !'"[3]

The first man who came into the battle-field was this Āmir Hadramī.

Hakīm Ibn Hizām and 'Amir Hadramī were both non-believers, when Badr was fought. 'Utba and Abū Jahl, the leading chiefs died infidels. When persons of consequence, such as these, regarded the battle of Badr as a revenge for Hadramī's blood, we need not care if others, born hundreds of

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1. *Isābah*, Description of Hakīm Ibn Hizām.

2. Tabarī, p. 1313 and *Sīrat* Ibn Hishām, Ghazwa Badr.

3. More details are given in Tabarī, pp. 1314-1316.

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years after the battle, believed that it had been the outcome of an intended plunder of the caravan.

An Essential Point

The fact thus stands definitely established that the battle of Badr was not the sequel to a plundering expedition. But it is our duty to explain how the entire body of biographers mistook a fact so patent and manifest, and why in books like *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, we meet with statements that the original case of the battle was the attack planned against the trade-caravan.

As a matter of fact, in keeping with the rules of military campaigns, it was seldom disclosed where expedition was to be sent and why. In *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī* (Ghazwa Tabūk) there is a report on the authority of Ka'b Ibn Mālik,[1] a well-known Companion, who reports that: "Whenever the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) decided on a Ghazwa, he would speak of some other place."

The Commentators of *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī* have explained the word *"Turiah"* saying that on such occasions the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) used ambiguous and double meaning words. "I do not feel inclined to accept this interpretation of the word as a general rule. However it can be gathered from a survey of events that on certain occasions the real object was so ambiguously expressed that people were left making different conjectures. It is how Sa'd Ibn Khaithama might have come to know before-hand, on the occasion of Badr, that a fighting force, not a trade-caravan, was to be handled; while on the contrary, in *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī* on the authority of Ka'b Ibn Mālik himself we meet with a report to the effect that on the occasion of Badr only the trade caravan was the objective."

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1. How funny it looks that the 'Allama is here declaring Ka'b to be an authentic and dependable narrator——Translator.

We have already pointed out that an occurrence reported by a narrator (not excepting the Companions) is, in many cases, not the objective truth, but the interpretation of the narrator himself, that is, he reports as he viewed it. This is what happened in the case of Badr. No wonder then that the Companions guessed differently, and the guess in accord with the general temperament of the people got current.

Consequences of Badr

The battle of Badr had manifold effects on the religious and political conditions. In fact it was the first step of Islam towards progress. The powerful grandees of the Quraish, each of whom stood like a wall of steel in the way of Islam, were all wiped off. On the death of 'Utba and Abū Jahl, the Supreme leadership of the Quraish devolved on Abū Sufyān, which paved the way for the Umayyad ascendancy ; but the hay-day of the power of the Quraish was over

In Medīna 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay Ibn Salūl had been till now a declared infidel. He now made a show of crossing over to Islam, though throughout life he remained a hypocrite and died as such. The tribes of Arabia that had watched the trend of events were overawed, though not won over.

Side by side with the favourable turns, the hostile forces also showed new developments. The Jews had entered into a pact to remain aloof. But the decisive victory at Badr roused their jealousy, which they could not rein back. Details shall follow when we speak of the Jews.

Till now the Quraish had to lament the single loss of Hadramī. After the battle of Badr every Meccan house went into mourning and each Meccan child thirsted for revenge. The Ghazwa of Sawīq and the battle of Uhud were the outcome of the vehemence of this feeling.

Ghazwa of Sawiq
(Dhil Hijja, Hijra 2)

Abū Sufyān was now the chief of the Quraish, and as such his first duty was to be revenged for Badr. On the return of the Quraish from Badr, he took a vow never to dress his hair with oil and never to take an ablutionary[1] bath, until he had taken his revenge for those who had fallen. Consequently at the head of two hundred camel riders he advanced towards Medīna, confident of help from the Jews against the Muslims. First he approached Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab ; but Huyayy did not even open the door of his house. Then he came to Salam Ibn Mishkam, the chief of the Banī Nadīr, who was also the treasurer of the business investments of the Jews. He extended to Abū Sufyān a warm welcome, entertained him with sumptuous feasts and wines, and acquainted him with the secrets of Medīna. In the morning Abū Sufyān attacked 'Arīd, that lay three miles from Medīna, killed an *Anṣārī* named Sa'd Ibn 'Amr and set on fire a few houses and stocks of hay. By so doing, he thought, he had absolved himself from his vow. The news was brought to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who set out in pursuit. For provisions Abū Sufyān had nothing but "Sawīq," which, as he fled with mind upset, he dropped down in bagfuls, and the Muslims picked them up. Sawīq[2] is the Arabic word for Indian "*Sattū*" and hence the engagement is known as Ghazwa Sawīq.

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1. Ceremonial bath ordained for purification after any loss of seminal fluid in any way—Translator.

2. Sawīq or Indian *Sattū* is a preparation of wheat or barley first parched and then thrashed with a thrasher. When mixed with water and sugar, they are delicious.—Translator.

Marriage of Fātima
(Dhil Hijja, 2 Hijra-623/624 C.E.)

Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) was the youngest daughter of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Now she was eighteen years of age and proposals had started coming in. Ibd Sa'd has it that Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) was the first to offer; but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remarked that God's will would be done. Then 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) ventured to make a request; but again the Prophet made no reply and repeated the same words. The report does not, however, seem to be true. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in his *Isābah*, has quoted good many reports concerning Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) from Ibn Sa'd, but he has omitted this one.

At any rate when 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) made a similar request, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ascertained Fātima's consent and she kept quiet. Silence was in a way an indication of consent. Then he asked 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) what he had to offer as dower. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) said he had nothing. "What have you done with the "*Hutīya*" (name of the armour which 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) had got as booty in the battle of Badr), asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). "That I have", 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) answered. "Enough. That would do", was the Prophet's reply.

Readers may be led to think that the armour was something very costly. They should know that it cost only a hundred and twenty-five rupees. Besides this, 'Ali's household goods consisted of a sheep-skin and an old Yamanī sheet of cloth. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) made a present of all these articles to Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her). Till now 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) had lived with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). After

the marriage a separate house was needed. Hāritha Ibn Nu'mān, an *Anṣarī*, had a number of houses, several of which he had already offered to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) suggested a request for one more, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) refused. He said, "This is taking things too far. I can't stand the shame of it." Hāritha heard of it, ran up to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said, "Whatever I have is yours. By Allāh, whenever you take any of my houses, it is a greater pleasure to me than to keep it in my own possession." In short he vacated one house and 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) made a shift.

And here is an inventory of the dowry bestowed by the Lord of the Two Worlds, on the Crown of womenhood :

One cot...interwoven with Sarkanda fibre strings.

One leather quilt padded with palm leaves instead of cotton.

One water-skin.

Two pairs of mill-stones and two earthen pitchers.

When Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) was settled in the new house, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) paid her a visit. He stopped at the door, asked for permission and then stepped in. Now he had water brought to him in a basin. He dipped both his hands and sprinkled some of it on the arms and the chest of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him). Then he called Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) who came to him with unsteady steps and was likewise sprinkled over. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon hin) then said, "I have given you in marriage to the best man of my family."[1]

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1. All these details have been taken from *Isābah* and *Tabaqāt*.

Miscellaneous Events
(2-Hijra-623/24 C.E.)

According to the version of the historians it was in the second year of the Hijra that fasting during the month of Ramaḍān was made obligatory. Almsgiving on the day of *'Id* was also ordained this year. First the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) delivered a sermon (*Khutba*), dwelt on the meritoriousness of alms and then declared it to be religious duty. This year too *'Id* prayer was offered in congregation on the *'Id* ground. Before this year there used to be no *'Id* prayers. According to the chronological order of the historians, the Ghazwa of the Banī Quainqua' should have been described here ; but we propose to speak of it later at a more appropriate place.

GHAZWA UHUD[1]

(3rd year of the Hijra-624/25 C.E.)

"And faint not, nor grieve ; ye shall overcome, if ye are believers."[2] (3 : 139)

In Arabia a long series of wars could be started by the murder of a single man ; and these wars could go on for hundreds of years. The defeated party considered revenge a sacred duty that could never be time-barred and had to be performed if the party was to maintain its existence. The battle of Badr had claimed a toll of seventy lives from the Quraish, most of them their top chiefs ; and consequently, the whole of Mecca was thirsting for revenge.

The original investment of the trade caravan which at the time of Badr had safely come back to Mecca had been returned to the share-holders but the profits had been kept in reserve.

When the mourning for the dead at Badr had toned down, the Quraish were reminded of their duty. A few leading personalities—Abū Jahl's son 'Ikrama being one of them, —persuaded those whose relations had been killed in the battle to accompany them to Abū Sufyān. They represented to him that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had dealt a death blow to their community and it was time to have a revenge. They wished to utilize for that pur-

1. Uhud is a mountain 1-1/2 miles from Medina towards the north.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* says that this verse was revealed during the battle of Uhud.

pose the profits in reserve. This was a request that was accepted before it was made. Now the Quraish had an idea of Muslim strength and knew that this time they would require much more than what they had at Badr. In Arabia the best way to excite people and work up feelings was to to make use of poetic talent. The Quraish had two well-known poets, 'Amr Jumahī and Musāfi'. 'Amr Jumahī had been made a prisoner at Badr, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) out of his clemency had set him free. Now at the request of the Quraish, 'Amr set out from Mecca accompanied by Musāfi' and they warmed up the tribes with their fiery tongues.

Women were another serviceable instrument to excite men and goad them to hold out to the last. With the tender sex in the rear, the Arab would put in a desperate effort to do or die, for in the event of defeat shame and dishonour would befall his women. Moreover, many a mother there was who had lost her offspring and was crying for vengeance. The bravest matrons had taken vows not to rest till they had sucked the blood of those who had slashed their sons to death. In short when the army was ready to move it was joined by ladies from respectable families. A few names are given below:[1]

1. Hind, daughter of 'Utba, wife of Abū Sufyān and mother of Amīr Mu'āwiya.
2. Umm Hakīm, wife of 'Ikrama, son of Abū Jahl.
3. Fātima, daughter of Walīd and sister of Khālid.
4. Barza, daugther of Mas'ūd Taqafī, the chief of Tā'if.

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1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 386. Zurqānī, Vol. IV, p. 30. Zurqānī also names Sulafa bint Sa'd and Umaira bint 'Alqama in addition to these six. They all got religion later on, except Khunās and 'Umaira of whom nothing is known in this respect. (Zurqānī, *'Alal Mawāhib.*)

5. Rīta, wife of 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ.

6. Khunās, mother of Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair.

In the battle of Badr Hamza had killed 'Utba, the father of Hind ; and Jubair Ibn Muṭ'im's uncle had also met death at his hands. Hence Hind worked up Wahshī, the slave of Jubair to murder Hamza. Wahshī was an expert in the use of spear and was promised his freedom in return for this service.

'Abbās, an uncle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who had embraced Islam was still living at Mecca. Through a fast courier, he sent to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) a written message intimating the whole situation. The courier was instructed to reach Medīna within three days.

Apprised of these developments, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) deputed on the 5th of Shawwal in the 3rd year of the Hijra, two spies, named Anas and Mūnis to find out facts. They brought the news that the Quraish had reached near Medīna and their horses had laid bare the grazing fields of 'Arīd. Hubab Ibn Mundhar was then despatched to find out the number of the enemy forces. The town being in danger of an attack, guards were posted all round. All night long Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda and Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh kept armed guard at the door of the Prophet's Mosque.

In the morning the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) consulted the Companions. The *Muhajirs* in general, and the elders among the *Anṣār*, suggested that the women should be sent away to safe castles out of the town, while the men should stay and stand a siege. 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay Ibn Salūl, who had, as yet, been never consulted, favoured the same opinion.[1] But the younger Companions,

1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1389, European Edition.—S.

who had not been able to take part in the battle of Badr,[1] insisted that they should march out and meet the enemy. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) went inside the house and come out with his armour on. The Companions were sorry to think they had insisted on going out against his wish, and said, that they withdrew their suggestion. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remarked that it did not behove a Prophet to put off arms once he had put them on.

The Quraish reached the outskirts of Medīna on Wednesday and encamped near the mountain of Uhud. On Friday, after the Jum'a prayers, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) marched out with one thousand followers. 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay, who had joined with three hundred followers turned back saying that Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had not listened to his advice. Only 700 Companions were thus left with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Of these a hundred were equipped with armour. Having come out of Medīna, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) reviewed the force and youngsters were sent away, for instance Zaid Ibn Thābit, Barā' Ibn 'Āzib, Abū Sa'īd Khudrī, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar and 'Araba Ausī. How eager they were to die for the cause of God, may best be seen from the conduct of Rāfi' Ibn Khadij and Samura. When Rāfi' was told to go back as he was too young, he stood up on the tips of his toes so as to look taller. The trick served him well and he was selected.[2] Samura, who was the same age, forwarded the plea

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1. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 25—S.

2. Tabarī, Vol. II, p. 1391. The story given here has been borrowed from Tabarī. Other reports say that the reason for the permission to Rāfi' was his precautious skill as a bow-man. He was allowed when the Prophet came to know of his skill. See Ibn Hisham, Account of Uhud ; Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 29 and Bada'ey of Ibn Kathīr, Vol. IV, p. 15—S.

that he had always thrown down Rāfi' in their fights ; and if Rāfi' was allowed he too was to be permitted. A duel was held and Rāfi' was floored down. Consequently Samura was also selected.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) arranged the Muslim force with Uhud at the back. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair was made the flag-bearer and Zubair Ibn al-'Awwām, the Commander of the horsemen. Hamza was put in charge of those who had no coats of mail.[1] The rear being vulnerable to attack, fifty archers, under the command of 'Abdullāh Ibn Jubair were posted there with strict orders not to leave their positions even in the event of victory.

The Quraish had profited by the experience at Badr. They arranged their lines with particular care. The right wing was under the command of Khālid Ibn Walīd, whereas the left was commanded by 'Ikrama, son of Abū Jahl. Safwān Ibn Umayya, the well-known chief, was leading the cavalry. Detachments of archers were separately stationed under the command of 'Abdullāh Ibn Rabī'a. Ṭalḥa was the flag-bearer. Two hundred spare horses were ready in reserve.

Instead of the usual beat of drum, the battle began with the war songs of women, who advanced playing upon timbrels. Lament for those who fell at Badr or an incentive to claim blood for blood, was the theme of their verses. Hind, the wife of Abū Sufyān led the party, fourteen others followed her. They sang :

"We are the daughters of the stars of heaven,
On soft firred carpets tread our feet,
If you dash on, we embrace you,
If back you turn, we bid adieu."

1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1394.

Abū 'Āmir, who had been a popular person at Medīna but had long been settled at Mecca, had joined with 150 men at his back. In the pre-Islamic days he had been greatly honoured by the Medīnites for his piety and virtuous life. Under the belief that the *Anṣār* would desert the Prophet when they saw him in the field he came forward and cried, "Do you remember me, I am Abū 'Āmir." "Yes, thou evil-doer", came the reply from the *Anṣār*, "We recognise thee. May God frustrate thy wicked intent."

Then Ṭalḥa, who carried the Quraish flag, came out and addressed the Muslims saying, "Oh, you, Muslims, is there any amongst you, who may despatch me to Hell, or should himself enter the Paradise at my hands."[1] "I am the man," retorted 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him), stepping out of the ranks ; and as he said this, his sword fell upon Ṭalḥa, and Ṭalḥa was a heap of flesh. 'Uthmān, his brother now bore the flag. The party of women followed him singing. He made a dash with a battle song :

> "The duty of flag-bearer is to dip his lance in blood or to break it on the enemy."

Hamza came up to meet him and struck him with his sword on the shoulder, cutting him through down to the waist, and crying as he struck : "I am the son of the Sāqī Hajjāj" (*i.e.*, my father was allotted the duty of providing water to the pilgrims who came to Mecca).

Now they joined in a general fight. Hamza, 'Ali and Abū Dujāna (Allāh be pleased with them) broke into the enemy ranks, sweeping off the whole formations. Abū Dujāna (Allāh be pleased with him) was a reputed warrior. Holding out his sword, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had asked if there was any to wield it worthily, and of the many hands stretched out to receive this honour, that of Abū Dujāna had borne the palm. At this

1. This was an ironical remark on the belief of the Muslims.

unexpected distinction he had felt as though infused with a new heroism ; and with a red handkerchief round his neck had issued forth strutting with pride. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had commented saying, "This manner of gait is highly displeasing to God, but commends itself to Him on this occasion."

Abū Dujāna (Allāh be pleased with him), was winding his way through the enemy, array, visiting death on one after the other, when he came upon Hind. He touched her hand with sword and then withdrew, for it would be unworthy of the Prophet's weapon to try it on a woman.

Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) was using a double hilted sword, slaughtering whole files wherever he charged. He came across Sabā' Ghaithānī,[1] and called out to him : "Where goest thou, O' son of *Khattanatun Nisa* ?" and despatched him at one stroke.

Wahshī, an Abyssinian slave had been promised freedom by his master Jubair Ibn Mut'im, if he could kill Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). He was on the look out for Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) when he chanced to pass by him. Wahshi hurled at him his spear, a favourite weapon of the Abyssinians. The spear pierced him through the navel. Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) attempted a counter-attack, but his legs gave way. He fell and closed his days.[2]

The flag-bearers of the Quraish were falling one after another, but the flag was not allowed to lie low. Whenever one fell, another would hold it aloft. Once a certain Sawāb took hold of it. He was instantly attacked by a Muslim and

1. His name was Sabā' Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā Ghaithānī. Among the pagan Arabs women too were circumcised though in rare cases. In Mecca this operation was performed by the mother of Sabā', and so Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) addressed him as the 'son of the circumciser of women.'

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 583.

the stroke was so severe that both his hands were chopped off and the flag dropped to the ground. But he could not see the national flag lying in dust. He threw himself down with the flag and held it up pressing it against his breast. He was slain uttering the words, "I have done my duty."[1] For some time now the flag lay on the ground, then a brave woman ('Amra bint 'Alqama) audaciously ran up and raised it erect. Then the Quraish were called upon to rally round her and pick up courage once again.

Abū 'Āmir was fighting for the Quraish. His son Ḥanẓala who had embraced Islam asked for the Prophet's permission to meet his own father. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was mercy for all and did not allow that the son should raise his sword upon his father. Ḥanẓala engaged Abū Sufyān, the commander-in-chief, and had nearly disposed him off, when Shaddād Ibn al-Aswad rushed from one side, intercepted his blow, and killed him. Yet the Muslims had the upper hand. The death of the flag-bearers and the irresistible onslaughts of 'Ali, Abū Dujāna (Allāh be pleased with them) and others obliged the enemy to take to their heels. The fearless ladies who were encouraging the warriors fell back in confusion ; and victory was clearly in sight. But the Muslims ranks fell to securing booty. Their example was followed by the archers who had been posted to guard the rear.

'Abdullāh Ibn Jubair made every effort to hold his men back, but could not. Seeing that the archers had deserted their positions, Khālid launched an attack from the rear. 'Abdullāh Ibn Jubair held out with a few followers but they were killed to a man. Now the way was clear, and Khālid with his horsemen made a dauntless assault. Those engaged in securing booty turned round only to find swords flashing over their heads. In the confusion of moment the two forces got

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1. Ibn Hishām and Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1401—S.

so muddled that Muslims were killed at the hands of Muslims. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair, whose features bore a close resemblance to those of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and who was carrying the Muslim flag, was put to death by Ibn Qamiyya[1]. Cries went up that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had been martyred. This created a great confusion, even the bravest lost heart ; the front rank utterly confounded, fell upon those in the rear, and could not know foes from friends. Hudhaifa's father Yamān was caught in the melee and swords rained on him. Hudhaifa was crying that he was his father, but none would listen to him and he was killed. Hudhaifa, in a spirit of selfless devotion only uttered the prayer, "O' Muslims ! May God forgive you."[2] Looking round, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw only eleven Companions by his side. Of these the name of 'Ali, Abū Bakr, Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqās, Zubair Ibn al 'Awwām, Abū Dujāna and Ṭalḥa (Allāh be pleased with them) are particularly known. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* on the other hand reports that only Sa'd and Ṭalḥa were left with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

In this state of chaos, most of the believers felt utterly despaired. They could hardly do better. Stranded in the midst of the enemy, each had to look to himslef where he was. Nobody knew anything of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) was weilding his sword with deadly effect and playing havoc with the enemy. But the object of his heart's desire (the Holy Prophet) was not in sight. Ibn Nadr, the uncle of Anas, fought his way past the spot[3] and saw 'Umar (Allāh be

1. Some pronounce it as Qumaiya—Translator.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, p. 581.

3. This is the version found in most of the books on *Sīra*. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* repeats the same facts except that the name of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) is not mentioned.

pleased with him) who had thrown away his sword in despair[1] "What are you doing here ?", he asked. Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) replied, "What for should we fight now. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is no more living." "It is no good to be living when he is no more", said Ibn Nadr ; and saying this he dashed into the enemy ranks and died fighting. When the battle was over, his dead body was found covered with eighty wounds caused by all sorts of weapons. He could not be identified except by his sister who recognised him by his finger.[2]

The Companions continued battling, while their eyes looked out for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Ka'b Ibn Mālik was the first to spot him. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had a visor on the face, only the eyes being visible. "Here is the Prophet, O' Muslims"! shouted Ka'b, and on hearing it the Companions rallied round him. The enemy now concentrated their pressure against this group.

Again and again they advanced like a rolling tide, and again and again the *Dhul Fiqār* (the sword of 'Ali) flashed and repulsed them. When they pressed very hard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called out, "Who will die for my sake." Ziyād Ibn Sukn, with five *Anṣāris* stepped out to do this duty. One after the other, they fell.[3] The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered the dying Ziyād to be brought to him. He was carried and had the unique honour of breathing his last with his face on the feet of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh

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1. The author in all probability, means the spot where the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stood—Translator.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, p. 579 ; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. II, p. 138.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ghazwa Uhud, says they were seven *Anṣāris*, and all died one after the other.

be upon him :

"How proud and full of glory
Passes away the humble devotee,
Who, when breathing his last,
Finds his death-bed honoured by thy presence."

A fearless Muslim, even in these circumstances was enjoying a feed of dates. He moved forward and asked the Holy Prophet, "Where shall my place be if I am killed ?" The Prophet (peace and bleslings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "In the Paradise." Thrilled with the good news, he fell upon the enemy and was killed.[1]

'Abdullāh Ibn Qamiyya, a well-known warrior of the Quraish, elbowed his way through the lines and got very near to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He struck the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on the face so hard that two links of the visor got pierced into the face. Swords and arrows were raining from all sides. The Companions made a cardon round the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Abū Dujāna (Allāh be pleased with him) bent down to shield him and received the shower of arrows on his back. Talha caught the sword strokes on his hands and got one severed. The relentless foe was showering arrows and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was saying, "O' Lord ! forgive my people for they are ignorant."[2]

Abū Ṭalḥa, the step-father of Anas, was a famous archer. He discharged so many arrows this day that two or three bows broke down in his hands. With his shield he protected the face of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) from the enemy's shots. Now and then the

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, p. 579.—S.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ghazwa Uhud, Vol. II, p. 9.

Prophet raised his head to have a look at the enemy, and whenever he did so, Ṭalḥa would say, "Raise not your head lest some should injure you ; this chest of mine is here exposed to receive the shots.[1] Sa'd Ibn Waqqāṣ also a good bow-man, was with the Prophet at this time. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) passed to him his own quiver and with the words : "May my parents be sacrificed for you", asked him to go on shooting.

It was in these circumstances that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), in a moralising mood remarked, "How can a people prosper who injure their prophet." These words did not please God ; and God revealed the Verses : "You have no say in the matter." The fact is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter on Ghazwa Uhud.

Then the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with the faithful followers made his way to the summit of the mountain as the enemy could not reach there. Abū Sufyān noticed it, and, with a body of men, tried to climb up the hill. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) and some other Companions hurled stones and he could not proceed.[2]

As rumour of the Prophet's death reached Medīna, Muslims hastened to the scene. Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) arrived and found him still bleeding. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) brought water in his shield and Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) began to wash the wound ; but it would not stop bleeding. Ultimately a piece of mat was burnt and placed on the wound and the bleeding stopped at once.[3]

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, p. 580.

2. Tabarī, pp. 1410, 1411.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, Vol. II, p. 584.

Abū Sufyān went up the opposite hill and cried, "Is Muhammad there ?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered his followers to make no answer. Abū Sufyān then called out the names of Abū Bakr and 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with them). When no answer was received, he cried out, "They are all killed." 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) could not bear it and retorted, "O' enemy of God ! we are all alive."

"O' Hubal,[1] exalted be thy name," replied Abū Sufyān. The Companions were directed by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to say, "Exalted and Great is God."

Abū Sufyān said, "We have 'Uzza[2] and you have naught." The Companions replied, "God is our Master, and you have none."

Abū Sufyān said, "This day we are avenged for Badr. My men have chopped off the noses and the ears of the dead. I had not ordered that ; but I was not sorry to hear of it."[3]

Ladies and children had been sent away to neighbouring castles under the escort of Yamān and Thābit. Hearing of the defeat, Yamān and Thābit made for Uhud. Thābit was killed fighting. Yamān, in the general confusion, could not be recognised, and swords fell upon him. His son, Hudhaifa, did his best to keep the Muslims back, crying that it was his father ; but none would listen to him in the muddled melee and Yamān was killed. The charitable Hudhaifa only said, "O' Muslims ! may God forgive this sin of yours." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) wanted to pay his blood-money on behalf of the Muslims ; but Hu-

1. Name of an idol worshipped by the pagan Arabs.

2. Name of an idol. Literally it means 'Honour'.

3. All these details are given in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter Ghazwa Uhud.

dhaifa forsook it. The whole story has been given in detail in Ibn Hishām. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* too has it, though in brief.

Infuriated by the memories of Badr, the Meccan ladies wreaked their vengeance upon the dead bodies of Muslims. They cut off their ears and noses; and Hind (mother of Mu'āwiya) strung them into a necklace to put it round her neck. She made her way to the dead body of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him), cut open his abdomen, bit at his liver; but could not swallow it and had to spit it out. For this reason Hind is spoken of as "*Jigar Khwar*" (the Liver-eater). She embraced Islam after the fall of Mecca. How she did it is in itself an instructive tale, which shall follow later on.

Many a Muslim women too took part in this Ghazwa. 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) and Umm Sulaim (mother of Anas) served water to the wounded. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of *Bukhārī* Anas is reported as saying that he had himself seen 'Ā'isha (Allāh be upon with her) and Umm Sulaim, with their trousers drawn up, bringing water in water-skins and taking it to the wounded Muslims. When one skin got empty, they hastened back for another fill. In another report it is mentioned that Umm Salit (mother of Abū Sa'īd Khudrī) too discharged this duty.[1]

Just when the Meccans had started a general attack and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had by him only a few faithful Companions, Umm 'Umara reached there and tried to shield him from harm, using sword and arrows to drive back the assailants. Once Ibn Qamiyya dashed forth towards the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him); Umm Umara stepped forward and stopped him. She received a wound on her shoulder, which left a cavity. She struck him with her sword in return; but he had donned a double armour and so the blow proved

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Uhud, pp. 581, 582.

ineffective.[1]

Ṣafiyya (sister of Hamza) heard of the defeat and set out from Medīna. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called her son, Zubair, and told him not to let her see the dead body of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). Zubair informed her of the Prophet's instructions. She said she had already heard of her brother's death and added that it was not very great sacrifice in the way of Allāh. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) then permitted her, and she rushed to the scene and looked at the severed pieces of her brother's body. Intense love agitated her mind ; but she uttered not a word except the verse : "To God we belong and unto God we return" and then prayed for the peace of his soul."[2]

Another woman, belonging to the *Anṣār*, had lost her father, husband and brother. Their deaths were reported to her one after the other, but the response evoked by each report was the querry whether the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was safe. She went up to him, looked at his holy face and then broke out saying : "With you safe in our midst, misfortunes have not a being.[3]

Of the Muslims seventy were killed, the majority being *Anṣārīs*. So poor was the community that they could not even afford enough of cloth to cover the dead bodies of their martyrs. For instance a Companion, Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair had so short a shroud that either the head or the feet would remain uncovered. At last his feet were covered with a kind of grass known as "*Adhākhir*." This was such a pathetic sight that, later on, whenever the Muslims happened to recollect it, their eyes got wet with tears. The martyrs were buried, two

1. Ibn Hishām, p. 84.

2. Tabarī, p. 1421.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 1425.

in each grave, covered with blood without being given a bath. Priority was given to those who had a large portion of the Qur'ān by heart. No funeral prayers could be said for these martyrs at that time.[1] Eight years after this battle, *i.e.*, a year or two before his death, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) passed by the place. He was overwhelmed with grief, and uttered words full of sorrow as if a living being were saying farewell to the dead. Then he delivered a *Khutba* and said that he did not fear the Muslims would turn pagans, but they might get engrossed in worldly interests.[2]

When the two armies retired from the battle-field the Muslims felt extremely exhausted on account of their wounds. Yet thinking that Abū Sufyān might take advantage of their defeat and renew his attack, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked if any of them would volunteer to pursue the infidels. Seventy men offered their services including Abū Bakr and Zubair (Allāh be pleased with them).[3]

Abū Sufyān left Uhud and reached a place known as Rauhā. Here he felt that he had left his task half-done. The

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1. It is Bukhārī's version. But there are other authentic reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said the funeral prayers for the martyrs, particularly Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). The dead bodies were brought to him one by one, and according to others, in tens, and the Prophet said the prayers, including Hamza each time. This means Hamza had funeral prayers offered for him seven or seventy times. *Sharah Ma'ān al-Athar Tahavai*, Chapter "Prayer for the Martyrs" and *Nesab al-Raya Zail'ai*, Chapter Sayings concerning "Prayer for the Martyrs" and *Maghāzi Wāqidi*, p. 300, Calcutta Edition.

2. All these facts have been mentioned in various Chapters of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter, Uhud, p. 584—S.

Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had already anticipated all that. Next day the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had it announced that the Muslims would not disperse. So he marched to a place known as Hamrā'-al-Asad which lay at a distance of eight miles from Medīna. The tribe of Khuzā'a had not embraced Islam till then, yet they had been friendly to the Muslims. Its chief Ma'bad Khuzā'ī heard of the Muslim rebuff and came to see the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). On his return he met Abū Sufyān who told him of his intentions. "I come here", said Ma'bad, "having seen Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) advancing with great preparations and it would be almost impossible to oppose him." Consequently Abū Sufyān beat retreat.[1] Historians, in their love for multiplying the number of battles have designated this incident as Ghazwa Hamrā-al-Asad and described it under a separate head.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) returned to Medīna and found the whole city gone into mourning. Wherever he went, he heard wailing and lamentation in every house. He was grieved to find that all who fell in the battle had their mourners doing their duty to the memory of their dear ones ; but there was none to mourn the death of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). Overwhelmed with grief the words that there was none to mourn the loss of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) escaped his lips.[2] The *Anṣāris* were touched to the core when the remark came to their ears. They asked their women to go to the house of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and lament over the death of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). Soon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw at his door a whole crowd of wailing women crying

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 584—S.

2. *Musnad* of Ahmad, Vol. II, p. 84.

lamentations on the death of Amīr Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thanked them for their sympathy, prayed for their well-being, but added that it was not permissible to cry lamentations in memory of the dead. (Women in Arabia were used to wailing and lamenting aloud, they would tear off their garments, dig their nails into their cheeks, slap themselves on the face, and put up loud screams. This undesirable practice was, from that day, stopped for future.[1] The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) prohibited all wailing for the dead, adding that it did not behove a Muslim.[2] Sura *Al-i-Imrān* contains a full description of Ghazwa Uhud).

Miscellaneous Events of the 3rd year Hijra

This year, *i.e.*, the third year of the Hijra, Imām Hasan was born on the 15th of Ramadān. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was married to Hafṣa, the daughter of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), who had been widowed at the time of Badr.

This year the law of inheritance was also revealed. So far the *Dhavī-al-Arhām* (ذوی الارحام) or blood relations had no share in the property, their shares were now specified. A pagan woman, who could till then be married to a Muslim, was now declared unlawful for Muslims wedlock.

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1. Ibn Hishām, Ghazwa Uhud and *Musnad Ahmad*, Vol. II, p. 84.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter, "Funeral."

GHAZWAT AND SARAYA[1]

(4th year of Hijra *i.e.*, 625/26 C.E.)

With a few exceptions, the tribes of Arabia were not all arrayed against Islam. The root cause was idol-worship, a matter of faith so dear to the heart of every tribe ; and that Islam was pledged to abolish. Besides this, the Quraish exercised great influence over all Arabia. During the *Hajj* days, when the tribes assembled at Mecca, the Quraish used to incite them against Islam. Another major cause of hostility was that the tribes had lived on loot and plunder ; Islam tried to stop it by word and deed. Thus they felt that, in case Islam got ascendant, their means of livelihood would be denied to them. The victory at Badr had, however, over-awed the tribes, and made them inactive for a time ; but the reverse at Uhud changed the situation. Once again the tribes were up against Islam. The numerous skirmishes (Saraya) that one finds recorded in the books on the Prophet's biography are the links of the same chain. In keeping with their usual practice, the historians while describing these battles, have not dealt with their causes. But Ibn Sa'd, in his *Tabaqāt*, and some other eminent writers on this subject have dealt with the causes of each battle, saying how a particular tribe intended an attack on Medīna and how the Prophet (peace

1. The difference between a Ghazwa and a Sirya is controversial, the general view being that it was a Ghazwa if the Prophet was personally leading, and a Sirya if the command was entrusted to a Companion, in the absence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had to send a force to checkmate its designs.

Sirya Abi Salama

First of all, in the month of Muharram, in the fourth year of the Hijra, Ṭalḥa and Khuwailid, whose tribes lived in the mountainous area of Faid and Qatān, instigated their tribesmen to attack Medīna. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of it, he sent 150 *Muhajirs* and *Anṣārīs* under the command of Abū Salama. Hearing of his approach, the tribesmen fled away.[1]

Sirya Ibn Unais

Later on, in the same month, Sufyān Ibn Khālid who belonged to the tribe of Lahyān and was the chieftain of the mountainous areas of 'Uraina, planned an attack on Medīna. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent, 'Abdullāh Ibn Unais who by his diplomacy got an opportunity to kill Sufyān.[2]

Sirya Bi'r Ma'ūna

In the month of Safar of the same year, Abū Barā', the chief of the tribe of Kilāb[3] came to the Prophet (peace and

1. In *Tabaqāt* (p. 35) the wordings are: "It was reported to the Prophet of God that Ṭalḥa, Salama, sons of Khuwailid came to their people and incited the men who would obey them to make war against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

2. *Tabaqāt* Ibn Sa'd, p. 36. The wordings are "And now it was reported to the Prophet that Sufyān Ibn Khālid al-Hudhali collected bands of men for war against the Prophet."

3. Whether Abū Barā' was ever converted is a disputable point. Dhahabī believes he was never converted. *Isāba* says that reports are silent about his conversion; but there is a group which on the basis of certain reports believes in his conversion. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 867—8.

blessings of Allāh be upon him) and asked him to send with him a few Muslims in order to preach to his tribe. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remarked that he feared mischief from Nejd.[1] Abū Barā' replied that he himself stood their security. The Prophet agreed and sent 70 *Anṣāris* with him. These were all very pious men of saintly habits, the majority belonging to the Companions of the Ṣuffa. Their daily routine had been to collect fuel from the forest, which they sold in the evening and shared the proceeds with the other members of the Ṣuffa.

These men made a halt at a place known as Bī'r Ma'ūna. Through Harām Ibn Milhān, they sent the Prophet's letter to 'Āmir Ibn Tufail, the chief of the tribe. 'Āmir killed Harām Ibn Milhān. He also hurried up his men to the neighbouring tribes of 'Usiyya, Ra'l and Dhakawān, asking them to come prepared. Thus a big force was collected, which advanced forward under the command of 'Āmir. The Companions were waiting for the return of Harām Ibn Milhān ; and when he did not turn up they themselves moved forward. In the way they came face to face with 'Āmir. The infidels surrounded the Muslims on all sides and killed all of them,[2] except 'Amr

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1. Such an attitude was nothing strange. 'Āmir Ibn Tufail, the chief of that locality had put forth three conditions before the Prophet, *viz.*, (*i*) that he ('Āmir) should be proclaimed as the ruler of the cities (*ii*) that the Prophet should assume the kingship of the desert area and (*iii*) that the Prophet should nominate him ('Āmir) as his successor after him. In case of non-acceptance he declared his determination to attack the Muslims with the help of Ghatafān. The Prophet refused to accept these terms and so apprehended danger and trouble from him. (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Rajī' and Ra'l and Dhakawān).

2. This party of Companions included Ka'b Ibn Zaid whom the enemy took to be dead. But he survived and met death later on in the battle of the Trenches. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 88.

Ibn Umayya[1] whom 'Āmir spared saying that his mother had taken a vow to free a slave and so he was setting him free. Then he cut his locks of hair and left him. The Prophet had never been so grieved as when this mishap was reported to him. For a whole month the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) prayed against these evil-doers after his morning prayers. 'Āmr Ibn Umayya, on his way back, killed two men from the tribe of 'Āmir, whom the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had given immunity. 'Amr did not know of it. He thought he was getting revenge on Banu 'Āmir for their faithless conduct towards the Prophet's Companions.[2] The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) expressed his displeasure when it was made known to him, and announced the payment of their blood-money to be made.

Sirya Raji'

At about the same time some men belonging to the tirbe of 'Adul and the Qara approached the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with a request to send men to instruct their tribesmen in the Islamic ways as they had come under Islam. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent out ten persons whose leader was 'Āsim Ibn Thābit.

When they reached Rajī', place midway between 'Usfān and Mecca, these treacherous fellows betrayed the Muslims and prompted the Banū Lahyan to kill them all. The Banū Lahyan pursued them with two hundred tribesmen, half of whom were bowmen. The foe had nearly overtaken the Muslims,

1. Two *Anṣārīs*, 'Amr Ibn Umayya and Mundhar Ibn Muhammad 'Uqba, were coming up behind. Mundhar was killed when they reached the place of occurrence and 'Amr Ibn Umayya was taken prisoner, but later on released.....Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 89—S.

2. *Al-Badāya wa al-Nihāya*, Ibn Kathīr, Vol. IV, p. 73 and Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 92.

when they tried to escape by ascending on to a mound. The bowmen asked them to come down and promised protection. "I do not want the protection of an infidel", replied 'Āsim. Then addressing God he prayed to Him to let His Prophet know of all that. In short 'Āsim, with seven others, put up a good fight till all of them were killed. (The Quraish sent a party of men to fetch them a piece of flesh from 'Āsim's body so that he might be identified. But God would not allow such a disgraceful desecration of a Muslim martyr.[1] Bees swarmed over the dead body, and the men sent by the Quraish had to return unsuccessful). Three of the Muslims, two of whom were Khubaib and Zaid, did not distrust the words of the infidels, and came down from the mound. The infidels played false and had them bound. They were later on sold as slaves in Mecca. In the battle of Uhud, Khubaib had killed Hārith Ibn 'Āmir ; so the sons of Hārith purchased him with a view to killing him in revenge. For a few days he stayed at their house. One day he happened to be fondling with the granddaughter of Hārith, while he had a knife in his hand.[2] Accidentally the mother of the child came up. The sight of a naked knife in the hand of Khubaib sent through her body a shudder of fear. "Did you think", said Khubaib, "I would slaughter your child with this knife. No that is not our way." The members of Hārith's family took him outside the precincts of *Harm* and wanted to slay him.[3] He asked for permis-

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Book al-Maghāzī) does not name the third person. Ibn Ishāq says he was named 'Abdullāh Ibn Tāriq. There are reports saying that 'Abdullāh was also killed at this very time and at this very spot, while others say that he was put to death farther on at Zuhrān that lay on the road to Mecca. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 78—S.

2. Hārith's son, Abū Sarwa'a, who had killed Khubaib, turned a Muslim later on, and is honoured as a Companion. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 78—S.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* says it was a razor—S.

sion to offer two *rak'at* of prayer. The murderers allowed him this much respite. He offered two *rak'at* and then said, "I had a mind to continue my prayers much longer, but you might perhaps think I was afraid of death." Then he recited the following couplet : "When I am to be slain for embracing Islam, I care not in what manner I shall be slain. All this is for the sake of God and if He wills He will shower His blessings on the severed pieces of my body." (It has since then been customary that whosoever is condemned to death is allowed to offer two *rak'at* of prayer before being executed ;[1] and it is considered commendable).[2]

The second man was Zaid, whom Safwān Ibn Mu'āwiya had purchased with the intention of killing him. All the dignitaries of the Quraish assembled to witness his slaughter; and Abū Sufyān was one of them. When the executioner raised his sword, Abū Sufyān said, "Tell us the truth, if Muhammad were slain in your place, would you not think it lucky for yourself." "By God", retorted Zaid, "I would sooner give up this life than see a single thorn prick the foot of the Messenger of Allāh." This said, Nistās,[3] the slave of Safwān struck his head off.

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1. Tabarī, p. 1435 and *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd. The verse and other particulars have been quoted from Bukhārī, Ghazwa al-Rajī' and "Offering two *rak'at* before being beheaded."

2. This prayer is reckoned a commendable act, because it received the Prophet's approval when the report was communicated to him. (*Shara Siyar al-Kabīr*, Heading I, p. 15). The Prophet's approval imparted this significance to this prayer. (*Raud al-Anaf*, Vol. II, p. 171). The technical term for such a case in the terminology of traditionists is *Taqrir*, which means that an action performed in the presence of the Prophet, reported to him, if he was not himself a witness to it, is reckoned commendable or lawful provided the Prophet did not prohibit it.

3. Nistās later on got converted. Zurqānī, Vol. II, P. 84—S.

This chain of engagements comes down to the battle fought against the Jews. As the facts concerning the Jews and their history are in many ways connected with Islam, we intend to treat them as a separate topic and in doing so shall have to turn back to the events of the past.

Miscellaneous Happenings

It was in this year that Imām Husain (Allāh be pleased with him) was born in the month of Sha'bān, and that Zainab Bint Khuzaima, one of the wives of the Prophet, whom he had married this very year, died.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered Zaid Ibn Thabit to learn Hebrew language for he had lost all faith in the Jews. Books of history report that Zaid learnt it in fifteen days. This shows that the Medinites were already conversant with Hebrew.

This year the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) married Umm Salama. Also it was in this year that the Jews brought a case before the Prophet and requested him to decide it according to the Jewish law. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon) ordered the man to be stoned to death according to the law laid down in *Torah* (detailed discussion of these facts shall follow in other parts).

Some historians hold that prohibition of wine was ordained this year. But reports vary and we shall discuss it in full when we come to the topic of religious injunctions.

TREATY AND WAR WITH THE JEWS

(2nd to 4th Hijra *i.e.*, 623 to 625 C.E.)

We have already mentioned that the Jews had held sway at Medīna for a very long time. When the *Anṣārīs* settled there, they first entered into an alliance with the Jews, but later on rose to be their rivals. But the battle of *Bu'āth* shattered their power and now they were not in a position to claim equal status.

The Jews were divided into three tribes—the Qainuqa', the Nadīr and the Quraiza—and had their habitations round Medīna. They were mostly landlords, traders or skilled artisans. The Qainuqa', who carried on the profession of goldsmithy, were the most warlike and the bravest, and kept big stores of arms. The *Anṣārīs* were generally their debtors owing heavy sums of money. In addition to their political and commercial domination, the Jews were also held in high esteem for their religious knowledge and learning. The *Anṣārīs* were idol-worshippers and illiterate, and honoured the Jews as a more civilized and cultured community. When their children did not survive, they used to take a vow that they would convert their son to the Jewish faith if he was spared. Thus Medīna had many converted Jews.[1]

With the passage of time great evils had crept into the Jewish society. The distinguishing mark of their community was that they had, through money-lending business, estab-

1. Abū Dāwūd, Chapter of al-Jihād, Book al-Asīr.

lished an extensive sphere of influence and burdened the whole neighbourhood with their debts. Monopolists of wealth, they charged callously exorbitant rates of interest ; and had even wives and children pawned and mortgaged as securities against non-payment. Ka'b Ashraf himself had pressed a similar demand upon his *Anṣāri* friends.[1] In short they knew many methods of taking possessions of other people's land or gold.

So great, indeed, was their greed for gold that they would stone little children to death for the sake of an ornament worth a few coins of silver.[2] Affluent wealth had given birth to widespread adultery and fornication. Those who indulged in these evils were mostly the well-to-do who could not be brought to book. Once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked a Jew, "Do your religious laws prescribe mere whipping as the punishment for adultery ?" "No, Sir ! the adulterer ought to be stoned to death. But a time came when adultery became common among the higher classes. Whenever one of our nobility was found guilty, we let him go scot free, while a commoner got his due as the law prescribed. Ultimately it was decided that instead of being stoned to death the accused should be whipped so that the high and the low could be equally punished."[3]

When Islam came to Medīna, the Jews realised that their cruel hold could not last long. With the rise of Islam their age-long religious ascendancy was suffering a set-back. Judaism that was gradually spreading among the infidels of Medina abruptly stopped making any head way. On the other hand, the new conquests provided the *Anṣaris* with means to

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, Vol. II, p. 1016.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Murder of Ka'b Ashraf.

3. *Asbāh al-Nuzūl Wahīdī*, p. 145, Egypt Edition and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, p. 49, Stoning of the Jews.

pay off the crushing Jewish debts. Again, the moral evils generally prevailing among the Jews, which wealth had veiled from view, were getting publicly exposed.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had no doubt concluded with the Jews a treaty promising security to life and property and freedom of conscience ; but as a Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) it was his duty to preach and admonish against immorality. The Verses of the Qur'ān again and again revealed their morals :

> "Listeners are they to falsehood, devours of the forbidden." (5 : 42)

> "And thou shalt see many of them hastening towards sin and transgression and their devouring of the forbidden." (5 : 62)

> "And also because of their taking usury whereas they were prohibited there-from, and also because of their devouring the riches of men unlawfully." (4 : 161)

This naturally created among the Jews a great deal of ill-feeling against Islam ; they resorted to harassing the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and working against Islam. But the Prophet had ordered to bear all their mischief with patience :

> "Ye shall surely be proven in your riches and in your lives ; and will surely bear much hurt from those who were vouchsafed the Book before you and from those who associate gods, and if ye endure and fear, then verily that is of the commandments determined." (3 : 186)

The Jews had made it a point to greet the Prophet with the words : "*As Sam-o-'Alaikum*", instead of "*As Salam-o-'Alaikum.*" The former expression means "May death overtake thee." Once 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was

with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and overheard this salutation. "Death on you, you accursed ones", she said in a fury. "Don't be so harsh", said the Prophet. "Didn't you hear what they said ?", replied 'Ā'isha. "Yes, I did", said the Prophet, "but I have answered it with "*Wa-'Alaikum*" (the same to you) and that is enough."[1]

Not only did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) show courtesy and forbearance towards the Jews, but was also agreeable to adopting social ways similar to theirs ; and treating their religion with respect it had enjoyed. The Arabs, for instance, had been in the habit of dressing their hair with a parting in the middle, while the Jews did it without any parting. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) followed the Jewish custom. In the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* we find a report to the effect that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) preferred to follow the people of the Book in matters in which God had not given specific directions.[2]

On his arrival in Medīna, he found the Jews observing fast on the day of *'Āshūr* (tenth day of Muharram) ; he ordered his followers to do the same. Whenever he saw the corpse of a Jew being carried, he stood up as a mark of respect.[3]

Once a Jew was praising Moses (peace be upon him) as superior to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). An *Anṣāri* got enraged and hit the Jew with a stone. The Jew made a complaint to the Prophet, who said, "Hold me not superior to other Prophets. On the Dooms Day all shall become senseless and I shall be the first to recover, and then I shall see Moses standing and holding the pillars of

1. Mentioned by Bukhāri in various Chapters.

2. Bukhārī, Vol. I, p. 562—Sulaimān.

3. Bukhārī, Book of *Janā'iz* or Funeral, Vol. I, p. 175.

the *'Arsh* (Seat of God) with his hands.[1]

Injunctions so far revealed in the Qur'ān had all commanded courtesy and social cooperation with the People of the Book. The Qur'ān says :

> "Today are allowed unto you all clean foods, and the meat of those vouchsafed the Book is allowable for you, and your meat is allowable for them." (5 : 5)

> Generally the Holy Qur'ān spoke of their exalted position : "O' Children of Israel, remember My favour wherewith I favoured you and that I preferred you over the world." (1 : 122)

They were not invited at this time to subscribe to anything in Islam beyond that which is contained in the following words of the Qur'ān :

> "Say thou : O' People of the Book ! come to a word common between us and between you, that we shall worship none save Allāh, and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that none of us shall take others as Lords beside Allāh. Then if they turn away, say : bear witness that verily we are Muslims." (3 : 64)

Nothing in this message was contrary to their accepted beliefs and convictions. But this conceding and accommodating spirit was requited with nothing but a determined effort to root out Islam in all possible ways.

To lower down the prestige and honour of Islam in the eyes of others, they told the non-believers that, so far as religion was concerned, the infidels were far better than the Muslims. Of this too Qur'ān speaks thus :

> "And saying of those who have disbelieved : these are better guided as regards the way than the believers." (4 : 51)

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1. Bukhārī, Vol. II, p. 668, Commentary on *al-A'rāf*.

To discredit Islam they would go to all lengths, even embrace Islam and then turn apostates to let people think why would any body forsake it, if it were a true religion. The Qur'ān says :

> "And a party of the people of the Book say, believe in that which hath been sent down unto those who have believed at the break of day, and disbelieve at the close thereof, haply they may turn away." (3 : 72)

In addition to all this, the Jews resorted to political manoeuvres for uprooting Islam. They knew that the secret of the strength of Islam lay in the unity brought about by it between the two warring tribes of Aūs and the Khazraj. If the seed of discord could be sown between these tribes, Islam, they thought, would die a natural death. It was quite an easy affair to revive old rancours among the Arabs. Once a number of persons belonging to both the tribes were assembled and having a talk together. Some Jews joined them and turned the talk on the battle of Bu'āth. This was the battle the Aūs and the Khazraj had fought to the mutual destruction of their power. Old memories were revived, and all of a sudden the long extinguished fire of former hostilities flared up. Hot words were exchanged and then they got from little to more, unsheathing their swords. Luckily the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) got the news. He reached the spot and cooled down their roused passions by his wise counsel, when the following verse was revealed[1] :

> "O ye who believe ! were ye to obey any party amongst those that have been vouchsafed the Book, they would, after your having believed, render you infidels." (3 : 100)

Among the Muslims there was already a group of hypocrites who had outwardly embraced Islam but were at heart

1. *Iṣābah*, Vol. I, p. 188.

its bitterest enemies. 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay Ibn Salūl, their leader was easily enticed into a secret league. In collaboration with this man, the Jews started a conspiracy. Luckily for them, 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay had already been an ally of the Banū Nadīr, a Jewish tribe. Before the battle of Badr, it was 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay who had been sent a letter by the Quraish asking him to turn out the Muslims or they would exterminate the Medinites : but they had failed in their purpose (as already stated). Again after the battle of Badr, they addressed a letter to the Jews, which ran thus :

> "You have arms and castles, therefore, fight with our enemy (Muhammad) or we shall do to you so and so, and nothing would check us from reaching out our hands to the anklets of your women."[1]

Abū Dāwūd speaks of this letter while dealing with the Banī Nadīr and hence names only the Banū Nadīr as the addressee. In fact the letter was addressed to all the Jews in general. It is for this reason that the famous traditionist, Hakim, has taken the two incidents of Qainuqa' and Banī Nadīr as one.

In short the situation had by now deteriorated so greatly that danger from the Jews was apprehended to the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) when he left the house at night. Talha Ibn Barā', a Companion of the Prophet, while on his death-bed, made a will that the Prophet was not to be informed in case he expired in the night, for harm might come from the Jews. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ; in his *Isābah*, has quoted this in full on the authority of Abū Dāwūd.[2]

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Banī Nadīr, *Kitāb al-Khirāj*—Sulaimān.

2. *Isābah*, version of Talha Ibn Barā'.

Ghazwa Bani Qainuqā'
(Shawwal, 2nd Hijra *i.e.*, March, 634 C.E.).

The victory at Badr had made the Jews more apprehensive. They had seen how Islam was growing into a power. The Qainuqa', the bravest and the most powerful of all the Jewish tribes, were the first to declare war and violate the treaty they had made with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).[1] Ibn Hishām and Tabarī, on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, have quoted a report from 'Āsim Ibn Qatāda Anṣāri, which runs thus :

> "The Qainuqa' were the first among the Jews who broke the treaty concluded with the Prophet ; and made war with the Muslims during the period intervening between the battles of Badr and Uhud."

Ibn Sa'd, while dealing with the Ghazwa of Banū Qainuqa' remarked :

> "When the battle of Badr took place the Jews manifested their malevolence and their spirit of revolt and retracted from their plighted word."[2]

An unexpected incident added fuel to the fire. An *Anṣārī* woman with a veil on her face came to the shop of a certain Jew in the market place of Medīna. The Jew violated her honour. This made the blood of a Muslim boil with rage and he made a short work of the Jew. The Jews killed the Muslim in return. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was informed, he went to them and said, "Fear God, lest wrath of God should fall upon you as it did upon the people at Badr." "We are not like Quraish", came the haughty reply, "When you come to deal with us, we will let you realize what battle means."

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1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, p. 19.
2. Zurqānī, Vol. I, p. 529.

The Jews having violated the treaty and virtually declared war, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was forced to resort to force. They shut themselves in their forts and the siege continued for fifteen days. In the end they agreed to abide by any decision given by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay, being an ally of the Jews, pleaded with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to banish them away.[1] This took place in the month of Shawwal in the second year of the Hijra *i.e.*, March, 624 C.E. Accordingly they were sent to a place in Syria known as Adhr'āt. These were 700 men including 300 armed warriors.

Murder of Ka'b Ibn Ashraf
(Rabī' al-Awwal, 3rd Hijra *i.e.*, August, 634 C.E.)

Ka'b Ibn Ashraf was a reputed Jew poet. His father, who belonged to the tribe of Tai, came to Medīna, settled as an ally of the Banī Nadīr, and acquired such honour and position that he was married to the daughter of Abū Rāfi' Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq[2] the leading personality known as the prince merchant of Hijaz. Ka'b was born of this union,[3] and as a result of the two-fold relationship, had friendly terms both with the Arabs and with the Jews. His poetic talent added to his influence over his people. In course of time, his wealth made him the leader of all the Jewish community in Arabia. He fixed monthly allowances for all Jewish scholars and religious men of repute. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had settled at Medīna, the Jew scholars,

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1. The language used by the biographers in general shows that the Prophet wanted to murder all the Jews and that on the forceful and vehement pleadings of 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay he yielded. But the details as given in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd repudiate such assumptions.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Murder of the infidels."

3. *Tārīkh Khamis*, p. 464.

who came to Ka'b to receive their allowances, were asked to give their views about Islam and the Prophet of Islam ; and they were paid their salaries only when their opinions were found to be in agreement with those of Ka'b.[1]

He hated Islam from the very depth of his heart. The loss of the Quraish dignitaries at the battle of Badr had given him a severe shock, and he had personally gone to Mecca to offer condolences. There he composed elegies full of pathos and a spirit of revenge, and recited them before huge gatherings of the Meccans, amid tears of his own and those of his audience. While dealing with these events Ibn Hishām has quoted these elegies. Most of the poems of this type are usually spurious ; yet inasmuch as these elegies seem to be couched in the language of the day, a few of them may bear repetition :

> "The millstones of the battle ground the men at Badr. Weep we must over mishaps like Badr, where many a noble face that shone white and radiant and gave shelter to the needy, was for ever lost."

On his return to Medīna, he began to incite people and compose satirical verses against the Prophet.[2] In Arabia poetry exerted the same influence over public mind as the stirring speeches of great statesmen and the articles of leading newspapers do today. A single poet through his verse could ignite a whole tribe.

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1. Zurqānī on the authority of Ibn Ishāq, Vol. II, p. 9.

2. In Abū Dāwūd we find these words : "Ka'b Ibn Ashraf used to satirize the Prophet through his verse and excite the infidels of the Quraish against him. (Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, Chapter "Banishment of the Jews") Ibn Sa'd has these words : "Ka'b Ibn Ashraf was a poet who composed satirical verses against the Prophet and excited the people against him." The Commentary by Ibn Jarīr (Vol. V, p. 79) says : "Ka'b Ibn Ashraf went to the infidels of Mecca and excited them against the Prophet and asked them to wage a war against him."—Sulaimān.

There is another report to the effect that he went to Mecca with forty others, met Abū Sufyān, and incited him to avenge the dead at Badr. Abū Sufyān took them all to the *Haram*, and there, holding the curtain of the Ka'ba, they vowed vengeance for the battle of Badr.[1]

Not satisfied with all that, he made plans to get the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) secretly assassinated. 'Allāma Ya'qūbī, in his history says: "Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, the Jew, made an effort to get the Prophet treacherously murdered." This report is further corroborated by another quoted by 'Allāma Hafiz Ibn Hajar,[2] who, while dealing with the murder of Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, states on the authority of 'Ikrima that Ka'b invited the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to a feast and appointed his men to murder him when he came. Hafiz Ibn Hajar has declared this report to be weak, yet in view of the existing circumstances the weak points in the sources do not warrant its rejection.

Fearing more trouble from these covert designs, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) spoke of it to his Companions, and with his approval, Muḥammad Ibn Maslama consulted the leaders of Aūs, and then as advised, murdered him in the month of Rabī al-Awwal in the 3rd year of the Hijra *i.e.*, August, 624 C.E.[3]

Traditionists have stated that Muḥammad Ibn Maslama came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and asked for his permission in these words, "Let us have permission to say something." "To say something" has

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1. *Tarīkh Khamīs*, p. 527. Perhaps this refers to the incident already mentioned. Ibn Khamīs has given further details.

2. *Fath al-Bārī*, description of Ka'b Ibn Ashraf, Vol. VII, p. 259.

3. *Maghāzī* of Ibn Sa'd, p. 21.

been interpreted by writers on history as saying false things, which they believe, the Prophet permitted as all is fair in war. But the report in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* has the words : "We may be permitted to have a talk with him." *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī's* words in no way suggest that permission to say something untrue was sought and given. On the other hand the dialogue reported to have taken place reveals low morals and inner mind of the Jews. Muhammad Ibn Maslama went to Ka'b and said, "We gave shelter to Muhammad and incurred the wrath of the whole of Arabia. Now alms and charities are demanded of us. So we come to you to pawn our things and get money from you." At this Ka'b said, "You will get fed up with Muhammad. All right, you should pawn your wives." But this beautiful face of yours, said Ibn Maslama, "does not let us trust the fidelity of our wives." Ka'b then replied, "then mortgage your children." "This will bring us into disgrace and disrepute throughout Arabia", said Ibn Maslama, "We shall pawn our arms and you know how great is their need these days."[1]

The report of this murder as mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* runs thus : "The people called Ka'b out of his house in a friendly manner and then pretending to smell his lock of hair caught hold of it, and killed him.[2] This report does not mention the Prophet permitting anybody to do it. Among the Arabs of the days such methods of murder were not objectionable. Later on we shall discuss in a separate chapter how the Prophet brought about a gradual reform in all these manners.

Ghazwa Banī Nadīr
(Rabi' al-Awwal, 4th Hijra *i.e.*, September 635 C.E.)

'Amr Ibn Umayya had killed two men belonging to the tribe of 'Amir, and their blood money had not so far been

1. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 13 and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, "Murder of Ka'b."
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Murder of Ka'b Ibn Ashraf."

paid off. A part of it, by virtue of a treaty, was to be paid by the Jews of the Banī Nadīr. To demand this, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself went to the Banī Nadīr.[1] They agreed to pay, but secretly directed a man to reach the second storey and to throw from above a stone, on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). A Jew, 'Amr Ibn Hajash by name, reached the upper storey with this intention. The Prophet was at that time standing at the foot of the wall below the upper storey. He sensed the evil intention and returned to Medīna.[2]

As already mentioned, the Quraish had sent to the Jews of the Banū Nadīr to kill Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) or they would themselves be exterminated. The Banū Nadīr being already hostile, this message from the Quraish served as an impetus. They invited the Prophet to come with thirty men to meet their religious scholars, promising that if on hearing him, the divines would declare him to be true, they would not hesitate to accept him as a prophet. As they had already planned a revolt, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked them to sign a bond before he could trust them. To this they did not agree. Now the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) visited the tribe of the Banī Quraiza and asked them to renew

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1. The Prophet's talk with the Banū Nadīr has been reported in two versions : One with the purport mentioned by the author, the other with the purport of ascertaining how the blood money was to be paid to Banū 'Āmir and what had been their practice in this regard. Banū Nadīr and the 'Āmir being on friendly terms, the Prophet's consultation with the Banū Nadīr was quite likely. (*Sira Halabiya*, Vol. II, p. 227)—Sulaimān.

2. This version is mentioned in Ibn Hishām and other books. Zurqānī, from Musa Ibn 'Uqba's most reliable work on Maghazi, quotes as follows : "These men (the Jews of the Banī Nadīr) made wicked plans in collaboration with the Quraish, incited them to war and told them the secrets of the Muslims". Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 83.

the treaty, which they readily did. But this example set by their co-religionists could not induce the Banū Nadīr to come to terms.[1] Again they asked the Prophet to come to them with three men, and they would also call three divines ; and if these declared their faith in his prophethood they would follow suit. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) agreed. But in the way he learnt from a reliable source that the Jews were waiting for him, girded with swords, to kill him as he arrived.[2]

There were various causes for the rebellious attitude of the Banī Nadīr. They were well-entrenched in strong forts which defied capture. Moreover, 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbay had encouraged them with a message telling them not to surrender, for the Banū Quraiza would join them and he too would be coming with 2,000 men for their help. The Qur'ān says :

> "Behold thou not those who dissemble saying unto their brethren who disbelieve among the people of the Book ; If ye are driven forth we shall surely go forth with you, and we shall not ever obey any one in your respect, and if ye are attacked, we shall surely succour you. And Allāh beareth witness that surely they are liars."
>
> (59 : 11)

But the expectations of the Banū Nadīr came to naught. The Banū Quraiza did not help them and the hypocrites could not openly come to their aid against the Muslims.

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1. All these details can be seen in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd. It is strange that the biographers are quite ignorant of this report in Abū Dāwūd.

2. In *Fath al-Bārī* this report has been mentioned on the authority of Ibn Mirdoya and the compiler has declared it to be authentic. The reports in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* too show that the Jews of the Banī Nadīr were contemplating false-play with the Prophet. The heading in the *Bukhārī* is "The Departure of the Prophet towards the tribe of the Banū Nadir to settle the blood money of two men and of their intention to do him harm."

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) besieged their forts for fifteen days. Some of the trees standing around their forts were cut down. 'Allāma Suhailī, in *Raud al-Anaf*, says that the whole orchard was not cleared away, only the trees known as "*Linah*" (a kind of date which is not eaten by the Arabs) were removed. The Qur'ān says:

> "Whatsoever fine palms (*linah*) ye cut down or left standing on roots thereof, it was by the leave of Allāh, and in order that He might abase the transgressors."
>
> (59 : 4)

It is possible that the trees were providing a hiding place to the enemy and so they were removed.[1]

In the end the Jews of the Banū Nadīr agreed to leave Medīna taking with them all the goods that they could carry on their camels. Accordingly all of them deserted their houses and rode off. Men of wealth and eminence like Sallām Ibn Abī al-Ḥuquaiq, Kināna Ibn al-Rabī Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq and Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, went to Khaibar where they were received with great honour and were recognized as chiefs. This migration is to be remembered as it forms a prelude to the battle of Khaibar.[2]

The Banī Nadīr were leaving their homesteads, yet they marched off with such a paraphernalia of splendour that one

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1. The author's view is supported by the verdict of Imām Aḥmad, who declares that trees in a field of battle are cut down only when it is indispensable to do so. It is in connection with this incident that the traditionists have quoted the opinion of Imām Aḥmad; adding at the same time that it would be in keeping with the Prophet's precedent to set the trees on fire if they served as a bulwark for the enemy. It follows that according to those scholars the cutting down of trees on the occasion was dictated by military exigencies. *'Umdat al-Qārī*, Vol. VIII, p. 191—Sulaimān.

2. Tabarī, p. 1452.

would mistake them to be going in a festive procession. They rode their camels, to the accompaniment of song and beat of tom-tom by singing girls, including the wife of the famous poet 'Urwa Ibn al-Ward 'Abasī, who had been purchased by the Jews. The Medinites said they had never seen so grand a procession.[1] The arms left by them numbered fifty coats of mail, fifty helmets and 340 swords. When the Jews had left, there was the problem of the *Anṣāri* children who had embraced Judaism. The Jews had intended to take them away on the ground that they were their co-religionists; but the *Anṣāris* had not allowed it. On this occasion the following Verse was revealed :

"There is no compulsion in Religion." (2 : 256)

Abū Dāwūd has given this account under the heading of *Jihād* in the Chapter of "Compulsion upon the Prisoners", on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās.

1. All these details are given in Tabarī, p. 1452.

GHAZWA MURISI', EVENT OF IFK AND GHAZWA AHZAB

(5th Hijra *i.e.*, June, 636—May, 637 C.E.)

By now, the combined intrigues of the Quraish and the Jews had stirred up the whole land from Mecca to Medīna. The tribes one and all set about making preparations for an attack on Medīna. The Anmar and the Tha'laba were the first to move. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of it, and on the 10th of Muharram, Hijra 5 (June, 626 C.E.), he left Medīna with four hundred Companions and reached the place known as Dhāt ar-Riqā'. Hearing of the approach of the Muslim army the tribesmen fled into the mountains.[1]

Ghazwa Dūmat al-Jandal[2]

In the month of Rabī' al-Awwal, of the same year, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was informed of the infidels mobilising a huge army at a place known as Dūmat al-Jandal. He marched out with 1,000 Companions, and again the enemy took to flight on hearing of his approach.

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1. Ibn Sa'd, Ghazwa Dhāt ar-Riqā' , p. 43. (A report in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* says that this Ghazwa took place after the battle of the Trenches. The prayer at the time of danger was, for the first time, offered on this occasion).

2. The correct word is Dumat al-Jandal. But Ibn Athīr says it is Daumat al-Jandal, which he says is the name of a village near the city of Ḥimṣ. Dūmat al-Jandal is said to have been the name of a fort.

Ghazwa Murīsī'[1] or Banū Muṣṭaliq (5th Hijra Sha'bān *i.e.*, January, 637 C.E.)

Khuza'a was the tribe in alliance with the Quraish. Once it struck the Quraish that, as descendants of Ibrāhim (peace be upon him) they must in every way enjoy distinction from others. A short stay in the open plain of 'Arafāt is a part of Hajj ceremonial. This open space was situated outside the boundary of *Haram*. The Quraish made it a rule that, while others should go to 'Arafāt, they would stay at Muzdalifa, a place within the boundary of the *Haram*. Appropriating to themselves similar other privileges, they had assumed the title of "*Ahmas*". Nevertheless, they had been kind enough to allow this appellation to others provided they submitted to their restrictions, and with such people they condescended to have matrimonial ties. The tribe of Khuzā'a was one of those thus honoured.[2] The Banū Muṣṭaliq, a branch of the Khuzā'a, inhabited the place known as Murīsī', which was nine marches away from Medīna. Hārith Ibn Dirār, the chief of the tribe, acting on his own initiative or at the instigation of the Quraish, made preparations for an attack on Medīna. On receipt of information the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent Zaid Ibn Khusaib for further enquiry. Zaid, on his return confirmed the report, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of

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1. Ibn Ishāq, from whom Tabarī and Ibn Hishām have borrowed, has placed this battle in the 6th year of the Hijra. But Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba places it in the 5th year. Imām Bukhārī has pointed out this disagreement in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. But by some mistake Bukhārī records that Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba dates its occurrence in the 4th year of the Hijra, whereas he does it in the 5th. 'Allama Ibn Hajar, in *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. VII, p. 322, on the authority of Baihaqī, Hākim, Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba and Abū Ma'shar, holds the 5th year to be more correct. Ibn Sa'd too has declared its date to be the 5th year. For details see *Fath al-Bārī*.

2. Ibn Hishām gives the details, vide, Vol. I, p. 67.

Allāh be upon him) ordered his Companions to get prepared for a battle. On the second day of Sha'bān, the Muslim army set out from Medīna. When the news reached the people at Murīsī', the fighting force under Hārith melted away, and he himself managed to escape. But the inhabitants of Murīsī' put themselves in battle array and kept up a steady downpour of arrows for a long time. The Muslims made a sudden all-out attack which put the opponents to flight. Ten of their men were killed and the rest made prisoners. They numbered 600. Two thousand camels and 5,000 goats were captured as booty.

The version given above is from Ibn Sa'd. The *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*[1] and the *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*[2] report that the Prophet took Banū Muṣṭaliq by surprise when they were giving their animals a drink. Ibn Sa'd has referred to this version as well, declaring[3] that the former is more authentic and reliable. In this connection Hāfiz Ibn Hajar in *Fath al-Bārī*, remarks that the report of a historian can in no way be preferred to the report of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī and of Muslim. In fact, the report of the *Ṣiḥaḥ* too, when judged by the criteria set by the traditionists, cannot form the basis of an argument, as the chain of its narrators ends at Nāfi', who far from taking part in the battle had not even seen the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Such reports are technically known as *Munqata'*[4] or the Broken Ones.

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "'Atq."

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Jihād and Siyar.

3. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Book Maghazī, pp. 45, 46

4. Probably the author was led to declare the report a broken one in view of the narrators named in the beginning. At the end of the report, however, it is clearly stated that Nāfi' received it from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar who himself took part in the battle. (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book Jihād and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book al-'Ataq). This link given, the report cannot be termed as a broken tradition—Sulaimān.

It was an ordinary encounter, but a few significant features have persuaded the historians to confer on it the dignity of a separate heading. One characteristic feature of this battle was that, tempted by prospects of booty, the hypocrites too had joined the Muslim army. These wicked people always waited for opportunity to create trouble. One day a *Muhājir* and an *Anṣārī* had a quarrel over taking water from a fountain. Following the old Arab tradition, the *Anṣāri* cried aloud for help, the *Muhājir* followed it up with a call to the *Muhajirs*. Swords were immediately unsheathed and an appeal to arms was imminent when some persons intervened and made peace between them. Now 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay, the chief of the hypocrites had his chance. "You have yourself brought this evil upon you", said he to the *Anṣārīs*, "you invited the *Muhājirs* and made them so strong that now they challenge you as your equals. There is still a way out. If you withdraw your support, they will be forced to flee from here."

The whole affair was reported to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) was present. He flared up with rage and asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to order some one to strike the head of 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay off his shoulders. "Would you like", replied the Prophet, "that people should go about saying that Muḥammad kills his own Companions."[1]

By a strange coincidence 'Abdullāh Ibn Ubbay, that arch-enemy of Islam and the greatest of the hypocrites, had in his son, 'Abdullāh by name, an equally staunch and devoted Muslim. The Prophet's displeasure gave rise to a rumour that he was intending to get Ibn Ubbay beheaded, and it came to the ears of his son. He came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said,

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, p. 728.

"The world knows how obedient I am to my father. But if you so desire, then order me, and I will bring his head to you in a moment. Let it not come to pass that you order some one else to kill my father, and I, for shame and love, should kill that man." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) consoled him saying that instead of killing his father he would always show kindness[1] to him. And the Prophet kept his word to this extent that at the time of 'Abdullāh's death he gave his own shirt to cover his dead-body and personally led his funeral prayer. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) held the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) by the skirt of his robe, protesting that he was offering prayers for a hypocrite. But who could stem the tide of the Prophet's boundless mercy.

Marriage with Juwairīya

Juwairīya, daughter of Hārith Ibn Abī Dirar, was one of the prisoners of war. A report by Ibn Ishāq, which is also found in various books on traditions, says that the prisoners were given away as slaves, and that Juwairīya was allotted to Thābit Ibn Qais. But she, as the report runs, asked Thābit Ibn Qais to set her free on payment of ransom, and Thābit agreed to it. She had no money with her, and tried to raise a sum for her release and came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was then present. Ibn Ishāq then quotes 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) as saying (which was certainly her personal opinion) that Juwairīya had very sweet manners, and hence on seeing her approach, she thought, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) too would be impressed by her beauty as it had impressed her. In short, says the report, Juwairīya went to the Prophet. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Would you accept if a

1. All this detail is given in Ibn Sa'd, Tabarī, and in various Chapters of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

better treatment were meted out to you." She asked what that treatment could be. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "I pay your ransom on your behalf and take you as a wife." Juwairīya agreed. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) paid the money and married her.[1]

This is the report recorded by Ibn Ishāq. It is also found quoted in *Tabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd and *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd. But there is another version which explains itself better. Hārith the father of Juwairiya, was one of the chiefs of Arabia. When Juwairīya was taken prisoner, he came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said, "My daughter cannot be made a slave girl. My position is far above that. You had better set her free." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked if it would not be better to leave the matter to Juwairīya herself. At this Hārith went to Juwairīya and informed her that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had left everything to her, and that she should not let her own father down in the eyes of the people. Juwairīya replied that she loved to remain in the service of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) married her."

This report has been recorded by Hāfiz Ibn Hajar in his book *Isābah*. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar has borrowed it from Hāfiz Ibn Minda ; and has also remarked that its chain of narration is reliable. It is found also in the *Tabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd wherein Ibn Sa'd adds that Juwairīya's father himself paid off the money and when she had attained her freedom, she was married to Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book of Freeing the Slaves.

Effects of this Marriage

When Juwairīya was married to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), the prisoners of war were all given their freedom forthwith, the Muslim army declaring that members of the family into which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was married could not be kept as slaves.[1]

The Event of Ifk (False Accusation)

The incident known as Ifk or false accusation of 'A'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) took place on the return journey from this expedition. This incident has been dealt with in books of history and traditions. But it is needless to discuss an accusation which the Qur'ān refutes with the words :

> "And why did you not when you heard of it, say ; It does not beseem us that we should talk of it, Glory be to Thee, this is a great calumny."

Nevertheless, it should serve to illustrate how a baseless lie spreads like wild fire. The calumnious tale was noised abroad by the hypocrites. A few Muslims too were led to believe it, and were later on punished for false accusation, as mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim.

Christian historians of today, like the hypocrites of old, have dwelt on this incident with such a flush of glee that words seem to issue forth from their pens like the spontaneous flow of a stream. But this is only what we ought to expect.

All these fights were mere harbingers of that general trial of strength which the Jews and the Arabs wished to make with a united force ; and which is known as the Battle of the Allies or the Battle of Trenches.

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Chapter on Emancipation of Slaves—Sulaimān.

Ghazwa Abzāb (Battle of the Allies or the Trenches) (Dhī Qa'd 5th Hijra *i.e.*, February 637 C.E.)

Having left Medina and settled at Khaibar, the Banū Nadīr started hatching a wide-spread conspiracy[1] against Islam. Their leaders, Sallām Ibn Abi al-Huquaiq, Huyayy Ibn Akhṭab, Kināna Ibn al-Rabī' and others came to Mecca, met the Quraish, and told them that Islam could be destroyed root and branch provided they lent their support. The Quraish were already waiting for an opportunity. Assured of their help, the Jews next visited the Ghatfān tribes and made tempting offer of assigning to them half the proceeds of Khaibar in perpetuity. The Ghatfān were only too willing to catch at the offer. While dealing with the Ghazwa Bī'r Ma'ūna, we have already mentioned how 'Āmir, the chief of the tribe, had threatened an attack by the tribe of Ghatfān.[2] The Banū Asad who were in alliance with the Ghatfān, were asked to come up with their men. The Banū Sulaim had blood connections with the Quraish, and on this ground they too joined the league. The tribe of the Banū Sa'd being an ally of the Jews was easily won over. Thus a mighty army made up of forces from all the tribes marched out for

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1. Tabarī has it thus: "Those who incited the people to war against the Prophet were the leaders of the Banū Nadīr who had been banished from their lands." The most reliable book on Maghāzī is that of Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, while giving details of the battle of the Trenches (Allies) in his book *Fath al-Bārī* has quoted these words: "Huyayy Ibn Akhṭab after the eviction of the Banū Nadīr went to Mecca to incite the Quraish to fight the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Kināna Ibn Rabī', Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq went to the tribe of Ghatfān and incited them against the Prophet and promised to pay them half the yield of dates of Khaibar. 'Uaina Ibn Hisn, Ibn Hudhaifa and Ibn Badr agreed to this and they wrote to their allies, the Banū Asad and they and their followers came under the command of Talha Ibn Khuwailid ....."

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Rajī'.

Medīna. In *Fath al-Bārī* their number is given as 10,000.[1]

This army consisted of three main divisions.[2] The Ghatfān[3] forces were led by 'Uayina Ibn Hisn Fazārī, a famous chief of Arabia. The Banī Asad were placed under the command of Talha and the supreme command was entrusted to Abū Sufyān.[4]

The news of this dangerous confederacy reached the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and he consulted his Companions. Salmān Fārsī, being an Iranian, was familiar with the method of defence behind the trenches, and he suggested that as it was inadvisible to fight in the open, the whole army should be concentrated in a well protected place with trenches dug out all round. The "*Khandaq*" which means anything dug out. The sounds "*K*" and "*H*" got changed into "*Kh*" and "*Q*" respectively, just as the Persian word "*Piada*" came to become "*Baidaq*" in Arabic. The suggestion was received with general approval and implements were collected to dig the trenches.

Medīna was well-protected on three sides by a continuous line of buildings and palm groves, which served well as a defensive line. Only on the Syrian side it was open to attack. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with 3,000 Companions came out of the town and on this side, they started digging trenches. It was 8th of Dhī Qa'd.

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Vol. I, part I, p. 47 and *Fath al-Bārī*.
2. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd. Vol. II, Part I, p. 47.
3. The commanders here named did not lead the entire army, the author having mentioned only those who were commanding the well-known tribes. Historians have mentioned the names of the commanders of other tribes as well, for instance, the Banū Sulaim were fighting under Mas'ūd Ibn Rukhaila, while Hārith Ibn 'Aūf led the Banū Murra. Hārith and Tulaiha later on came over to Islam. Zurqānī, Vol. II, p. 121. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, p. 47—Sulaimān.
4. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Vol. I, p. 47—Sulaimān.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself did the marking and the preliminary lay out. Then a ten yard (about 9-1/2 metre) length was allotted to each party of ten. The depth of the trench had to be 5 yards (about 4-3/4 metres). Three thousand pious hands took twenty days to complete the project.

One may well recollect how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), had worked as an ordinary labourer while the construction of the mosque at Medīna was in progress. Another scene equally touching presents itself on this occasion. In the long wintry nights, going without food.....sometimes for three days together.....the *Muhājirs* and the *Anṣāris* carry the excavated earth and stones on their backs. In rapturous love with one voice, they recited the couplet :

> "We are dedicated to serve Islam under Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) for as long as we live !"

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is throwing out the earth with his body smeared with dust and the following verse is on his lips :

> "By God, had God not shown us the right path, we should not have given alms or offered prayers ; These men have risen against us and we refuse to obey them though they come all combined."

The last rhyming word (We refuse, according to the Arabic text) he loudly recited and repeated it.[1] Along with this he prayed for the welfare of the *Anṣaris* saying :

> "O' God there is no good but the good of the Hereafter. O' God send Thy blessings unto the *Anṣāris* and the *Muhājirs*."

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Battle of the Trenches.

While digging, they once came upon a very hard piece of rock which none could break. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came up. Without food for three days and a stone tied against his belly, he struck, and the rock was split into pieces.[1]

With the hills of Sula' on their back, they arranged themselves into lines. The women were sent to well guarded forts of the town. As an attack was feared from the Banū Quraiza, Salama Ibn Aslam with 200 men was stationed there to ward off any attempt from that side.

So far the Jews of the Banū Quraiza had been neutral. But the Banū Nadīr tried to win them over. Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab (father of the Prophet's wife Ṣafiyya) himself went to Ka'b, the chief of the Quraiza; but the latter refused to meet him. Ḥuyayy sent to him the following message, "I have brought with me a huge army. The Quraish and all Arabia have flocked up, thirsting for Muḥammad's blood. Let not this chance slip by, for the end of Islam is near at hand." Still Ka'b was not willing and said, "I have always found Muḥammad true to his promise. It is not fair to break word with him." But the persuasions of Huyayy could not long remain ineffective.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of it and sent Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh and Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda to ascertain the truth and have a final word with the Banū Quraiza. In case they found that the Banū Quraiza had actually violated the treaty, they were told to report it on return in ambiguous words so that people might not get discouraged. The two gentlemen reminded the Banū Quraiza of their treaty obligations; but the Quraiza replied, "We know not who Muḥammad is and what is meant by a treaty."

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Battle of the Trenches.

In short the Banū Quraiza made a further addition to the number of this already huge concentration. The Quraish, the Jewish tribes and the entire strength of Arabia.....24,000 strong.....divided themselves into three bodies, and from three sides launched an attack on Medīna. So vigorous was the charge that it shook the very foundations of the city. The battle has been described by God in the Qur'ān in these words :

> "When they came upon you from above you, and from below you and when the eyes turned dull and hearts reached to the gullets, and of Allāh ye were imagining various things.....There were the believers proven and shaken with a mighty shaking." (33 : 10, 11)

The Muslims had among them a number of hypocrites, apparently supporting their cause. But the extreme weather, lack of supplies, continuous starvation, sleepless nights and the swarm of armies arrayed against them were the factors that exposed them all. One after the other, they came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and begged his permission to return to the city for their houses were unsafe. Of these the Holy Qur'ān says :

> "And a party of them asked permission of the Prophet saying, verily our houses lie open ; whereas they lay not open ; they only wished to flee." (33 : 8)

But the sterling worth of true Muslims was to be tested on this very touchstone. The Qur'ān says :

> "And when the believers saw the confederates, they said: This is that which Allāh and His Messenger had promised us, and Allāh and His Messenger had spoken the truth. And it only increased them in belief and in self-surrender." (33 : 25)

For about a month the siege continued with all its rigours. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon

him) and the Companions sometimes went without food for three days in continuation. One day the Companions, unable to bear any more, showed the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) the stones they had tied to their bellies. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) uncovered his own body, there were two stones fastened over the abdomen.[1]

The siege was long and dangerous. Once the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked his Companions if there was any who could bring news from the enemy. Three times he repeated the words ; only Zubair responded to the call. It was on this occasion that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave Zubair the title of "*Hawārī*" or a disciple.[2]

The besiegers had in the first place surrounded the trenches, secondly they wanted to attack Medīna from the quarter where the families of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the Companions were lodged in forts.

Unable to cross the trench, they flung stones and shot arrows from a distance. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had stationed various parties at various points on the trenches and these men kept the enemy at bay. One such detachment was under the personal command of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

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1. In *Shamā'il* of Tirmidhī, it is mentioned that the Arabs, when extremely hungry, carried a stone pressed against the belly, which kept them erect.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Battle of Ahzāb or the Allies (and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*), Book of al-Fadā'il. But Ibn Hishām in this connection names Hudhaifa Ibn Yamān. Hence the traditionists differ regading the incidents connected with these names. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar has proved by arguments that Hudhaifa was deputed to find facts about the Quraish, and Zubair about the Banū Quraiza. Wāqidi and Nisā'ī give these particulars in their reports. *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. VII, p. 312. Zurqāni, Vol. II, p. 139—Sulaimān.

Considering the hardships of the siege, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) feared lest the *Anṣār* should get disheartened. He wanted to patch up a treaty with the tribe of Ghatfān on condition of paying to them one third of the harvest yield of Medīna. With this aim in view, he called Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda and Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, chiefs of the *Anṣārīs*, for consultations. Both made replies in these words : "If such is the Command of Allāh, we dare not oppose it. But if this is a personal view, then we wish to say that none ever dared to demand a tribute from us, even when we were pagans. Now that Islam has raised us to an exalted position, it is out of question." The Prophet was satisfied with their firm resolve. Sa'd took the parchment containing the treaty conditions in his hands and rubbed off the writing saying, "Let them do what they can."[1]

Now the non-believers tried another strategy. The most reputed generals among the Quraish, like Abū Sufyān, Khālid Ibn Walīd, 'Amr Ibn al-'Aṣ, Dirār Ibn al-Akhtal and Jubaira were each day given supreme command turn by turn. Each on his turn led a general assault with the whole army, but none could cross the trench. They could only shoot arrows and hurl stones as the width of the trench was not very great.

This stratagem having failed, it was decided to make a general assault. The whole army with the chiefs of tribes in the vanguard mustered up. They chose to dash forward at a point where the trench happened to be comparatively narrow. Renowned warriors, like Dirār, Jubaira, Naufal and 'Amr Ibn 'Abd Wudd, spurred their horses on over the trench to the other side. 'Amr Ibn 'Abd Wudd, was the greatest of their warriors, his presence being supposed to be equivalent to a thousand horsemen. Wounded at Badr, he had left the field and then taken a vow not to oil his hair till he had avenged

1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1474.

his injury. Though ninety years old now, he was the first to step forward and, following the Arab custom, call for an adversary. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) rose to accept the challenge but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stopped him, for he was no less a person than 'Amr Ibn 'Abd Wudd. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) sat down. No one else made a response. 'Amr called a second time. The same voice made the solitary answer. Once more the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, it was 'Amr. "Yes, I know that", said 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him). At last the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) permitted him, offering a sword with his own hand and himself winding a turban round his head.

'Amr had often declared that if any one made three requests to him, he would stand honourbound to grant one at least. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) asked if that was true, and then ensued the following dialogue :

'Ali : I request you to embrace Islam.

'Amr : That is impossible.

'Ali : Then turn back from the field.

'Amr : I can't bear the taunts of the women of the Quraish.

'Ali : Then measure swords with me.

'Amr laughed and said he had never expected any mortal under the sun making such a request to him. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) was on foot. Chivalrous 'Amr could not bear it. He dismounted from his horse and dealt his first blow at his own steed cutting his hamstrings. Then he asked 'Ali who he was? 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) told him his name. "I do not like to fight with you", said 'Amr. "But I do", retorted 'Ali. 'Amr now filled with rage drew his sword out of the scabbard. Stepping forward he dealt a blow which

'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) received on his shield. But the sword pierced the shield and wounded 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) on the forehead. The wound, though not fatal, left, for ever, a scar to be proud of. As mentioned in *al-Qāmūs*, 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) was called *"Dhul Qurnain* (the two horned) because of the two marks on his forehead.....one inflicted by 'Amr, and the other by Ibn Muljim. It was now 'Ali's turn to attack, and his sword swooped down passing through 'Amr's shoulder blade. *Allāhu Akbar*, God is Great, cried 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) and victory was declared. Dirār and Jubaira followed 'Amr. But the *Dhul Fiqār* (the name given to 'Ali's sword) in action forced them to fall back. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) chased Dirār who turned back and wanted to attack with his lance, but suddenly stayed his hand and asked 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) not to forget that act of generosity. Naūfal, while fleeing, fell down into the trench. The Companions began discharging arrows at him. "O' Muslims !" said he, "I want to die an honourable death." 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) acceded to his request and going into the trench killed him with his sword and let him die an honourable death.[1]

This was the severest day as the battle continued all day long. The enemy kept up a continuous shower of arrows all along the time, without break. This was the day when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is reported in the traditions to have missed four[2] consecutive

1. These details are summarily given in almost all books. But the details we have given are from Ibn Sa'd and al-Khamīs.

2. There is much difference among the traditionists regarding the Prayers missed on this occasion. Some state one, others four. Those stating four again differ whether the Prophet missed four Prayers on single day, or on several days again and again or during the entire period of the siege.

Prayers, as the incessant downpour of arrows and stones made it impossible to leave the post.

The fortress where the women were sheltered stood near the habitations of the Banū Quraiza. The Muslim army all away with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), the Jews made an assault on the fortress. One of them came up close to the gate to spot out a vulnerable point. Ṣafiyya (an aunt of the Prophet) sighted him. Hassān, the famous poet, who had been ordered to guard these women was asked by Ṣafiyya to go and kill the man, lest he should go back to the enemy as an informant. Hassān had been afflicted with a disease that had made him too timid, he could not even witness a clash of arms as a silent spectator. He explained his inability, for had he been fit for such a job he would not have been there. Ṣafiyya pulled out a wooden pole supporting the tent, and going down struck the Jew on the head with such a force that it broke his skull. Ṣafiyya now returned and asked Hassān to go and strip him of his arms and clothes. But Hassān asked her to let that go as he did not need any of those things. Lastly, Ṣafiyya asked him to go and cut his head off and throw it down at the foot of the fortress to terrify the Jews. But this duty too Ṣafiyya had to perform herself. The Jews now felt sure that the fort was not unmanned, and dared not attack.[1]

The longer the siege dragged on, the more were the besiegers disheartened. Maintenance of supplies for an army of 10,000 was not an easy task. Moreover, in spite of the winter, the wind blew hard given rise to a violent storm. The ropes of the tents gave way, and cooking pots on the fire were overturned. This accidental mishap did more than a whole army could do. Hence has the Holy Qur'ān referred to it as the divine soldiery :

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1. Zurqānī quoting Tabrānī, Bazzār and Abū Ya'la, vide Vol. II, p. 129 and Ibn Hishām.

"O' ye who believe, remember Allāh's favour unto you when there came unto you hosts, and We sent against them a wind and hosts which ye saw not, and Allāh was of that which ye were working a Beholder." (33 : 9)

Nu'aim Ibn Mas'ūd Ashja'ī, Ghatfān chief, was highly influential both with the Jews and with the Quraish. He had turned a Muslim but the non-believers did not know of it. He held talks with the Quraish and the Jews separately and succeeded in creating a dissension.

Ibn Ishāq reports that Nu'aim, in order to sow the seed of discord, talked things that made them suspect each other, and this he did because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had said, that tricks were allowed in war. But Ibn Ishāq has not given the names of reporters. Even if he had done so, he does not rank high enough to command credit for such reports on his own authority. In fact the situation, as it was, made it possible to put an end to the alliance without resorting to lies. Ibn Ishāq does also say that Nu'aim told the Jews that the Quraish would retire in a few days, but they had to live with the Muslims as fellow country-men. Why should they be a party and create perpetual enemies for nothing, and in case they were bent upon doing it, they should ask the Quraish to send to their camp a few men of position as hostages so that if the Quraish chose to turn back before the hostilities were decisively ended, the Jews might detain them.

It is known that the Jews of Banū Quraiza had been at first reluctant to break their treaty with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). But Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhtab had won them over on condition that he would leave Khaibar to live with them when the Quraish were gone. The Quraish could never agree to send hostages. Naturally their refusal must have brought about the rift, without the Companion

having had to tell lies to cause it.[1]

Anyhow, the inclemency of weather, the prolongation of the siege, the severity of the storm, the lack of supplies and the desertion by the Jews all combined to make the Quraish give up the siege. Abū Sufyān announced to the army that the supplies had run short, the weather was cruel, the Jews had deserted and the siege was no longer possible. Having made this announcement, he ordered the drummers to beat retreat. The Ghatfān also marched off, while the Banū Quraiza repaired to their forts. The dark shadows that had hung over Medīna for three weeks were now dispelled. The Qur'ān says :

> "And Allāh drove back those who disbelieved in their rage, they obtained no advantage, and Allāh sufficed for the believers in the fighting and Allāh is ever Strong Mighty." (33 : 15)

The Muslims lost very few lives in this battle. But the *Anṣāris* were deprived of the greatest pillar of their strength.

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1. The Author's view is corroborated by a report in the Maghāzi by Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba, which has been briefly quoted in the *Musannaf* Ibn Shaiba, and in greater detail by Ibn Kathīr in his history. The report says that the Banū Quraiza's participation in this battle had been conditional upon the Quraish handing over a few of their respectable members as hostages, a condition that the Quraish did not fulfil. Hence they felt dissatisfied and made a secret offer of peace to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) provided the Banū Nadīr who had been exiled to Khaibar were again allowed to come back to Medīna. Nu'aim Ibn Mas'ūd Thaqafī (he was Ashja'ī and not Thaqafī) who had come to the Prophet to embrace Islam was present on the occasion. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) made a mention of the secret offer to him confidentially though intentionally. Nu'aim was one of those who cannot keep secrets ; and he disclosed it to the Quraish. This made the Quraish suspect the loyalty of the Banū Quraiza; and the alliance consequently broke off. See *Musannaf* Ibn Abī Shaiba, Book al-Maghāzī, Chapter "Ghazwa Khandaq" (Battle of the Trenches) and *Bidaya wa al-Nihaya*, Ibn Kathīr, Vol. IV, p. 113. Egypt Edition.—Sulaimān.

Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, the chief of the Aūs was fatally wounded and succumbed to his injuries. The way he was wounded is highly impressive and instructive.

Sa'd's mother and 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) were both lodged in the same fortress. 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) says that she was loitering outside the fort when she heard the sound of a foot fall behind her. On turning back she saw Sa'd, his lance in his hand, advancing fast in a rapturous mood and reciting the verse : "Tarry a while, O' Battle, till another man reaches thee. When time is come, what fear of Death".[1] "O' son, be quick, you are already late", cried Sa'd's mother. The coat of mail put on by Sa'd was too short and left his hands unprotected. 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) exclaimed, "O' that Sa'd's coat of mail were a little longer!" Unfortunately, Ibn al-'Ariqa aimed his arrow at one of the bare hands and the aorta was cut. When the battle of the Trenches was over, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) got a tent set up in the court-yard of the Mosque and began to look after his injuries.[2] The tent belonged to Rafīda, a lady who had accompanied the Muslim army with a stock of medicines and bandages and attended to the wounds of the injured. The tent belonged to her and she was incharge of the treatment. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with his own pious hand burned the wound with *Mishqas*[3] (an iron piece used for

1. Ibn Hishām, Tabarī and al-Khamīs.

2. These details are given in al-Khamīs. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in his book *Isābah* (description of Rafīda) borrowing from Imām Bukhārī's *Adab al-Mufrad* says that Rafīda was a lady who tended the injured. Ibn Sa'd, while giving details about Rafīda, says that her tent was pitched in the Holy Mosque and in this she tended the sick and the wounded. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, too we find a description of Rafīda's tent and her surgery room.

3. Wāqidī quotes Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab having said that the Banū Quraiza,

(*Contd. on* p. 119

burning the wounds). But the wound got swollen. Again it was touched but with no effect. After several days, that is after the destruction of the Banū Quraiza, the wound opened and Sa'd died.

End of the Banū Quraiza

As already related the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), when he first settled at Medīna, had patched up treaties with the Jews and guaranteed peace and full freedom of life, property and conscience. But when the Quraish wrote to them a threatening and inciting letter, they turned treacherous. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) tried to get the treaty renewed. The Banū Nadīr refused and they were banished. The Banū Quraiza concluded a fresh treaty and they were granted peace. These facts have been narrated briefly in *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim* in the following words : "As reported by 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar, the Jews of the Banū Nadīr and the Quraiza fought with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) banished the Banū Nadīr but allowed the Banū Quraiza to stay on and showed them favours."[1]

When the Banū Nadīr had been banished, their leading chiefs, Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, Abū Rāfi' and Sallām Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq had migrated to Khaibar and got recognised as leading chiefs. The battle of the Trenches was but the results of their machinations. They travelled far and near agitating the tribes till the whole country rose up in arms and attacked

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Contd. from p. 118)

in concluding a treaty and staying on were plotting a trick. He said they had stayed so that they might attack the Muslims in league with the infidels whenever they could get an opportunity. *Maghāzī* of Wāqidī, p. 362, Calcutta—Sulaimān.

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter, "Banishment of the Jews from Hijāz."

Medina in alliance with the Quraish. The Jews of the Banū Quraiza had a mind to stick to the treaty, but Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab won them over with his guiles, promising to re-establish himself at Medīna in case the Quraish abandoned the attack ; and this promise he fulfilled.

The Banū Quraiza openly took sides in the battle of the Trenches[1] ; and when repulsed, brought the greatest enemy of Islam, Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab[2] with them. Now there was no way out for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) but to settle accounts with them once for all.

The battle of the Trenches being over, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered the Muslims not to put off their arms and march against the Quraiza. Had the Quraiza behaved in a spirit of peaceful reconciliation, they should have been surely granted full amnesty after a satisfactory settlement of the issue in hand. But they were determined to resist. They openly abused the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to the face of 'Alī[3] (Allāh be pleased with him) who had advanced close to their forts

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1. Sir William Muir does not accept the testimony the historians reporting the active participation of the Banū Quraiza in this battle. His argument is that if that had been the case, the Qur'ān while speaking of this battle should have mentioned it. But the Qur'ān clearly says :

   "And He brought those of the people of the Book who backed them (*i.e.*, the confederates) down from their fortresses and cast into their hearts terror." (33 : 26)

   What word other than "*Muzāhira*" (help) is needed to prove their participation.

2. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1487 and Ibn Hishām, Vol. II, p. 146.

3. Tabarī has mentioned this in these words : "When he ('Alī) approached their forts, he heard abusive language being used for the Holy Prophet."

leaving the army in the rear. In short their forts were besieged and the siege continued for a month. In the end they sent word that they would abide by any decision given by Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh and his tribe (Aūs) had been the allies of the Jews, a connection which the Arabs respected more than kinship. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave his consent.

So long as no specific direction was received in the Qur'ān, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) used to follow the injunctions of the *Torah*, as he did in matters like the fronting of face during Prayers, stoning of criminals, and the reprisal customs.[1] The verdict given by Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, in accordance with instructions of the *Torah*,[2] was that the militants were to be killed, the women and the children to be made captives and their property to be treated as booty. In *Deuteronomy* (20 : 10) we find these orders :

> "When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labour for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it and when the Lord, your God, gives it into your hands you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, "Justification of war with those who break the promise." *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter, "Return of the Prophet from the battle of Allies."

2. Margoliouth says that as Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh had been injured in the battle of the Trenches by a man belonging to the tribe of Quraiza, and it later on proved fatal, so he gave such a cruel decision about them. But the man who had shot the arrow was Ibn al-'Ariqa al-Quraishi (belonging to the Quraish) and not a Quraizi (belonging to the Quraiza). This is clearly given in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*.

cattle and everything else in the city, all its spoils, you shall take as booty for yourselves and shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord, your God has given you."

When Sa'd pronounced the judgment, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is reported to have said, "It is a divine verdict that you have given." The words referred to the injunctions quoted above. The words that escaped the lips of the Jews, when the verdict was announced to them also indicate that they as well viewed it as one in accordance with the holy writ.

Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, the perpetrator of all this disturbance, when brought to the place of assassination, looked at the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and uttered these words: "I swear by God, I am not sorry for having been hostile to thee. Ay, the fact is that whosoever forsakes God, God in turn forsakes him." Then turning to the people he said, "O' people, We need not worry if we have to obey a divine command. It had been so ordained. It was a punishment God had written down for Israel."[1]

It should be remembered about Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab that, when banished to Khaibar, he had entered into a covenant not to help anyone against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), making God stand witness to it[2]. How he kept this covenant has already been narrated.

Critics have vociferously accused the Muslims of being merciless to the Jews of the Banū Quraiza. But the facts are

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1. Both these speeches are mentioned in Ibn Hishām and also Tabarī, Chapter of the Banū Quraiza.

2. *Balādharī*, European Edition, p. 22. It also appears in *Musannaf* of Ibn Abi Shaiba, Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Chapter of Banū Quraiza—Sulaimān.

as follows :

1. On his arrival at Medina, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) entered into a friendly treaty with them, granting them full freedom of conscience and security of life and property.

2. The Banū Quraiza had been inferior in status to the Banū Nadīr. If a man from the tribe of the Banū Nadīr killed one belonging to the Banū Quraiza, he had to pay only half the blood money. On the other hand if a man from the Banū Quraiza killed one from the Banū Nadīr, he had to pay it in full. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did the Banū Quraiza the favour of allowing them an equal status.[1]

3. While banishing the Banū Nadīr, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) renewed the treaty with the Banū Quraiza.

4. In spite of all that, the Banū Quraiza violated the treaty and took an active part in the battle of the Trenches.

5. The wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had been lodged in fort for safety. The Quraiza planned to break into the fort.

6. Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, who had been banished for sedition and who had roused the whole of Arabia and thus caused the battle of the Trenches, was brought back by the Banū Quraiza, an act that was the prelude to the outbreak of hostilities.

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, Book of Punishment, Chapter of Life for Life—Sulaimān.

Under the circumstances what better treatment could they deserve.

It has also to be kept in mind that to the Arab an alliance was as sacred as real kinship. The Banū Quraiza were the allies of the *Anṣāris.* It is why the *Anṣāris* most vehemently pleaded for them. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh, the chief of the Aūs, had in fact been responsible for making the Jews enter into the treaty. He must have been now in a fix ; it was the question of life and death for his allies whose cause was forcefully pleaded by all the *Anṣāris.* But what other judgment could Sa'd give.

The number of the killed as given by the historians was 600. But in the *Ṣiḥāḥ* (Six authentic books of Hadīth) the number given is 400. Out of these only one was a woman. She was ordered to be executed as she had killed a Muslim (Khallād)[1] by rolling down a stone from the fort. How bravely she faced death is mentioned in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd.[2]

She knew that she was one of the accused to be executed. One after another they came and were despatched. Each was summoned by name and each time the stunning call fell on her ears. Yet, unaffected she went on conversing with 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) with frequent bursts of laughter. Suddenly the swordsman cried out her name. With an air of indifference she rose to her feet. "Where do you go ?", asked 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her). "I had committed a crime", she replied, "and now I go to take the penalty." With these words she walked off cheerfully and offered her neck to the sword. Whenever 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) narrated this story she felt struck with wonder.

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1. Ibn Hishām, Ghazwa Banū Quraiza.

2. *Sunan,* Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb al-Jihād, Chapter, "Killing of Women."

The False Story of Raihāna

Several historians record that out of of the Quraiza prisoners, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered a woman—Raihāna by name—to be kept apart, and a few days later took her to wife. The historians who maintain that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not mind having conjugal relations with slave-girls, have cited two examples, one in the case of Raihāna and the other in case of Mariyah Qibtiya. Christian historians have fondly believed and painted it in the darkest colours. One of these writers, in a most sarcastic manner says: "The founder of Islam having enjoyed the sight of 700 assassinations came home to delight in....." In fact the whole story is pure fiction.

All the reports stating how Raihāna came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), have either been taken from Wāqidī or Ibn Ishāq. But Waqidī has explicitly stated that she was duly wed. Ibn Sa'd's version, borrowed from Wāqidī, reports Raihāna herself saying, "Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set me free and married me."

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in his *Isābah*, quotes the following from Muḥammad Ibn al-Hasan's *History of Medīna* "And Raihāna, of the tribe of the Quraiza who was a wife of the Prophet (peace and blesssings of Allāh be upon him) lived in this house."

Hāfiz Ibn Minda's book *Tabaqāt al-Sahāba* which has been the main source for the later traditionists contains the following words[1]: "Raihāna was taken captive, then set her free and she went to her own family and lived with her people like a purdah observing lady." Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, after having quoted it, remarks, "It is a highly significant fact

1. Vide *Isābah*, description of Raihāna, Vol. IV, p. 309.

to which Ibn al-Athīr paid no heed." Hāfiz Ibn Minda's version establishes the fact that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had set her free and that she lived with her family like a respectable lady. We hold this version to be the whole truth, and even if it is supposed that she entered the Prophet's *Haram*, she was certainly a married wife and by no means a slave girl.[1]

Marriage with Zainab
(5th Hijra-636-637 C.E.)

This year the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) married Zainab. Marriage is not an extraordinary affair, and hence this one deserves mention only when we would come to speak of the Prophet's wives. But this marriage was attended with circumstances that have made it an issue of the highest importance for hostile critics. Christian writers have given to the incident the deepest colours ; they believe that no other incident would so well serve the purpose of disparaging the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

We wish to discuss it in detail in order to trace out the source that gives to the adverse critics an opportunity of

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1. Biographical works have three versions of reports about Raihāna. One, that she was set free and went back to her people to live a secluded life. This is reported by Ibn Minda and stands uncorroborated. Second, that the Prophet set her free and had a mind to let her live as a wife like other wives, but, realising the extraordinary responsibility of a wedded woman, she preferred to serve as a slave-girl. This is what Ibn Ishaq reports. Third, that the Prophet left the decision to her own choice, and then she embraced Islam, and the Prophet set her free and married her. This is Wāqidī's report quoted by Ibn Sa'd through various chains ; and Waqidī has declared it to be the proved version. See *Kitāb al-Bidaya*, Ibn Kathīr, Vol. V, p. 305. And Imām Zohrī also corroborates the marriage version. See previous reference. For details refer to *Isābah*, account of Raihāna.

finding fault with the morals of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had adopted Zaid, a slave whom he had given his freedom, as a son. When he attained adolescence, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of marrying him to Zainab, the daughter of the Prophet's real aunt (Zainab's mother Umaima was the daughter of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib). Zaid having been a slave, Zainab was not agreeable to the match. "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) wanted her to marry Zaid, but she liked it not."[1] In the end, however, in passive obedience to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), she yielded. For about a year they lived as husband and wife, but always crossed with each other. Ultimately it came to such a pass that Zaid complained to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and desired to divorce her. "Zaid came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blesssings of Allāh be upon him) saying that Zainab was shrewish with him and that he wanted to divorce her." But the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) persuaded him again and again not to discard her."[2] The Holy Qur'ān says :

> "And recall what time thou wast saying unto him on whom Allāh had conferred favour and thou hadst conferred favour, keep thy wife to thyself and fear Allāh." (33 : 37)

But no persuasion could avail and Zaid divorced her. Zainab being a cousin had been brought up by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) under his own

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1. *Fath al-Bārī;* Commentary on the Qur'ānic Chapter *al-Ahzāb* or the Allies, as quoted from Ibn Abī Hātim.

2. *Fath al-Bārī,* Commentary on *al-Ahzāb* (the Allies) as quoted from 'Abd al-Razzaq quoting Ma'mar, who quoted Qatāda.

care. It was on his persuasion that Zainab had given her consent to the union which she considered much below her dignity. But a slave stood on par with a free man in the scheme of social equality the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) envisaged. Zainab was now degraded to the position of a divorcee. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of making amends for the loss of her honour by offering her, his own hand. In Arabia the adopted sons were till then considered to be as closely related as the real ones and so the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) hesitated in deference to popular opinion. But this was a custom emanating from the days of ignorance and had to be abolished. So the following Verse of the Qur'ān was revealed on this occasion :

> "And thou wast concealing in thy mind that which Allāh was going to disclose and thou wast fearing mankind, whereas Allāh had a better right that Him thou shouldst fear." (33 : 37)

In short the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) married Zainab, and the pagan notion treating an adopted son as a real offspring was demolished once for all. The hypocrites and the slanderers came out with their taunts ; but taunts are inevitable when one has to enforce a decree.

This is the truly factful picture. There is not the slightest shade of genuineness in the lavish colours the western pen has given to this incident. But one must candidly admit that the false paints have unfortunately been supplied by our own sources.

Tabarī has it that once the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) visited the house of Zaid. Zaid was not at home, and Zainab was dressing herself. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw her doing

that, and turned back saying : "Glory to Allāh, Most High and glory to him who turns the hearts".[1] Zaid came to know of it. He came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said, "I may divorce Zainab if you have come to like her."

I have quoted this dirty narration with a pricking of conscience. But to report a blasphemy is not to commit a blasphemy. This is the single report that forms the mainstay of authority for the Christian historians. But the poor fellows do not know what value this narration holds when critically viewed in the light of the principles set by the traditionists. Tabarī, the historian has taken this story from Wāqidī, the well-known liar and fabricator. He coined such fictions to provide some sort of sanction for the licentiousness of the 'Abbasid caliphs.

Historians other than Tabarī have also quoted similar obscene stories. But the traditionists have treated them with the indifference they deserved. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, had an inordinate respect for written authority. Yet in *Fath al-Bārī*, when commenting on the battle of the Trenches and dealing with this story, he remarks : "There have come to us many other such stories from Ibn Abī Hātim and Tabarī, which Commentators have often quoted. But one need not dabble in them."

Hāfiz Ibn Kathīr, the famous traditionist in his commentary says, "In this connection Ibn Abi Hātim and Ibn Jarīr have quoted certain reports handed down by the ancients, which we should overlook as they are false. Imām Ahmad too, on the authority of Anas, has quoted a report regarding this incident which is *Gharīb* and so we have ignored it.

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1. Tabarī, Early Events of 5th year of the Hijra.

The fact is that hypocrisy had hit its high water mark at this time. It was in this year that 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was falsely accused. The hypocrites used to give publicity to their calumnies so vigorously that every child would come to prattle of them. In the slander against 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) even some of the Muslims got involved, who were consequently subjected to *Qadhf*.[1]

Certain stories, the dregs of such calumnies, found way into uncautious writings. But the traditionists with a high criteria, like Imām Bukhārī and Muslim, who have a right to be considered the lawful authorities on the subject, have not a word of such rubbish.

Miscellaneous Incidents
(5th Year of the Hijra)

In religious history this year of the Hijra owes its importance to the various revelations concerning the reform of women. Hitherto they went about like their pagan sisters, and used similar robes and ornaments. Now they were ordered to go out of their houses with a large shroud over the head which should hang down over the face and also cover the chest. They were not to walk with jolting steps, had to talk from behind a curtain and avoid a coquettish language. As to the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), they were totally prohibited from appearing before men not their kith and kin, or near relations.

Marriage with the wife of an adopted son was illegal during the pagan days. This custom was now abolished. Adultery or fornication was ordered to be punished with a 100 stripes. In pagan days it was a common practice to scan-

1. *Qadhf* is the punishment awarded by Islamic law to those who accuse any Muslim falsely. Such men or accusers are awarded 80 stripes on different parts of the body.

dalise chaste women, who were helpless as there was none to shield them. This year the verse prescribing the punishment known as *Qadhf* (awarding 80 whips on different parts of the body without making it naked) was revealed and an accusation that could not be proved was declared culpable. In the absence of evidence the system known as "*Li'ān*," was to be followed *i.e.*, the husband and the wife were each to declare on oath that he or she was speaking the truth and the other was telling a lie after which they were to be separated.[1]

The Arabs had practised a kind of divorce known as *Zihār*.[2] (In pagan days if any one said to his wife that she was to him just like his mother's back, the woman stood divorced). This year this kind of divorce was declared to be illegal and its expiatory punishment was also specified.

In case water is not available, *Tayammum*[3] was allowed this year. As traditions say the Prayer of Fear too was ordered this year. We shall have to speak of it at its appropriate place.

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. II, p. 707, Sīrat Gazrūnī, Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, p. 212, *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. XII, p. 106. These injunctions can be found in *Sura Nūr* along with the description of the incident of *Ifk* in 5th Hijra.

2. In ancient days the pagans had this strange type of divorce. If some one said to his wife that her back was to him just like the back of his mother, or any other part of her body was like that of his mother, the wife stood divorced. This kind of divorce was called *Zihār*—Translator.

3. While performing *Tayammum* one has to strike one's hands or the palms of the hands against some holy but dusty ground twice. After the first striking one should pass his dust covered hand over the face and the second time the hand should be passed over the arms upto the elbows. This *Tayammum* is permitted when the water is not available or when the use of water is forbidden or is harmful—Translator.

TREATY OF HUDAIBIYA AND THE BAI'AT AL-RIDWĀN

(Dhī Qa'd, 6th Hijra.....April, 638 C.E.)

At a distance of one march from Mecca there is a well called *Hudaibiya*. The village nearby is also known by the same name. This treaty was put into writing here, and is therefore known as the Treaty of Hudaibiya.

The Treaty of Hudaibiya holds an especial importance in the history of Islam as it was the stepping-stone to all its future success. That is why the Holy Qur'ān speaks of it as a victory, though it was nothing more than a treaty of peace entered into by an apparently defeated party.

Ka'ba was the central seat of Islam. Islam had been originally founded by Prophet Ibrāhim (peace be upon him) and he gave this name to the faith he preached. The Qur'ān says :

> "It was he (Ibrāhim) who gave you the name of *Muslimīn*." (22 : 78)

The law revealed to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was not a new one ; it was the same old law as that of Prophet Ibrāhim (peace be upon him). The Qur'ān says :

> "The faith of your fore-father Ibrāhim." (22 : 78)

With the passage of time the children of Prophet Ibrāhim

(peace be upon him) had taken to idol-worship. With all that they still turned to the Ka'ba, the relic of their great ancestor, as a place of worship and the common heritage of all the Arabs, including the Qahtānites who came of a different stock. The tribes fought among themselves all the year round, for loot and plunder was their only means of subsistence and survival. However, during the four months—known as the forbidden months—all warfare was suspended. The tribes travelled to Mecca over long distances and performed devotional rites at the common temple. All the feuds were forgotten and the tribes thirsting for one another's blood were seen assembled in a brotherly fashion. Muslims had been forced out of Mecca. They did not and could not forget that they had no less a claim to the Ka'ba than the other tribes had. Moreover, the Muslims were bound up with Mecca in a number of ways. It had been their beloved home and its memories rankled in their hearts like a pricking thorn. Bilāl had been severely tortured in Mecca ; notwithstanding that, whenever he thought of Mecca he used to burst into tears and recite these couplets : "Oh, Can there dawn a day when I may spend a night in the valley of Mecca, with Adhākhir[1] and Jalīl, a day when I may alight on the stream of Majanna and see Shama and Tufail." Most of the Muhājirs had escaped with their lives, leaving their children and family behind.

Out of the four obligatory duties enjoined by Islam the Hajj or a visit to the Ka'ba had considerable merit. In short various reasons may account for the Prophet's decision to visit Mecca. That the Quraish might not misconstrue his purpose, he put on the customary robe for offering the 'Umra

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1. Adhākhir is the name of the land lying round Mecca. It is also the name of a kind of grass which gives out very good smell, and which grows in that area. Jalīl, name of a valley and of a mountain near Mecca. Shama is the name given to the highlands surrounding Mecca. For details see *al-Qamūs* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*—Translator.

and took with him the sacrificial camels.[1] Moreover, none was allowed to carry arms except a sword, which in Arabia was an indispensable part of equipage for a journey. But the sword too was to be kept sheathed all along.

The *Muhājirs* in general and a large number of the *Anṣārīs* had long looked forward to the pious pilgrimage, and so fourteen hundred men set out with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). At Dhu al-Halifa, the preliminary ceremonies connected with sacrifices were performed, *i.e.*, iron rings were put round the necks of the camels signifying that they were meant for sacrifice.

As a precautionary measure, a man belonging to the tribe of Khuzā'a, whose conversion to Islam was not known to the Quraish, was sent in advance to bring news of their intentions. The caravan reached 'Usfān when the man came up with the news that the Quraish had called together the tribes of "Ahabīsh" (tribes living round Mecca) and declared that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would never be allowed to enter Mecca.

In short the Quraish made vigorous preparations to offer resistance. They summoned their allies, who came in great numbers and encamped at a place called Balda, outside Mecca. Khālid Ibn Walīd, who had not so far embraced Islam, led a vanguard detachment of two hundred horsemen including 'Ikrima, son of Abū Jahl, and reached Ghamīm which lies midway between Rābigh and Juhfa.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) told the Muslims that the Quraish had sent their vanguard under Khālid, who had reached Ghamīm, and that they should by-pass him and turn to the right. When the Muslim army reached near Ghamīm, they could see the dust

1. Ibn Hishām has these words : "He took with him animals meant for sacrifice and declared his intention of performing an *'Umra*."

raised by the horsemen of Khālid. Khālid flew back to the Quraish and informed them that the Muslims had reached Ghamīm. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) moved forward and halted at Hudaibiya. Here water was scarce, there was only one well which soon ran dry ; but by the miraculous power of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), it was quickly filled with enough water to satisfy their wants.

The tribe of Khuzā'a had not yet openly declared for Islam ; but they were in alliance with the Muslims and enjoyed their confidence. Whatever plans the Quraish and the other infidels made were communicated to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) by the Khuzā'a. The chief of this tribe, Budail Ibn Warqa (who embraced Islam at the time of the fall of Mecca), came to know of the Prophet's arrival. He came to him with a number of followers and said, "The Quraish armies are advancing like the raging sea and they will not allow you to enter Ka'ba." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "Go and tell them that we have come to perform an *'Umra*[1] and not to show fight. Wars have reduced the Quraish to a wretched state, and they have suffered considerable losses. They would be well advised to make a truce for a specified period and leave me to the Arabs. If they are not agreeable to it, then by God, Who holds my life in His hand, I shall fight till my head is severed from the neck and God decrees what He wills." Budail went to the Quraish and said, "I have come with a message from Muhammad (peace

1. *'Umra*, is, so to say, a minor *Hajj*, performed with mostly the same rituals as the *Hajj*—that is to say, the pilgrim's robe has to be put on at Miqat outside the *Haram*, and then there is only tripping between Safā and Marwa and going round the Ka'ba. The hair is also got cut or shaved and the sacrifices are offered. All this is done in days other than those of the *Hajj*.

and blessings of Allāh be upon him). I may deliver it if you permit. Some mischief makers shouted that they did not want to hear a message from Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). But the more sober-minded among them permitted Budail and he disclosed the conditions offered by Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Uraw Ibn Mas'ūd Thaqafī stood up and spoke thus : "O' Quraish, am I not your father and ye my children ?" On getting a reply in the affirmative 'Urwa said, "Have you any suspicion about me ?" To this they all replied in the negative. Then 'Urwa said, "Allow me to go and settle the matter personally as Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) has proposed reasonable conditions." Thus 'Urwa came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with a message from the Quraish and said, "O' Muhammad, suppose you destroy the Quraish, it will be then the unique example of a man exterminating his own tribe. On the other hand if the war takes a turn for the worse then all this crowd at your heels will be blown away like dust." Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) burst into rage at this expression, and addressing 'Urwa with words of abuse said, "Do you mean we shall prove deserters and flee away." 'Urwa asked the Prophet who he was. He was told that he was Abū Bakr. "I would have given him an answer befitting his rude talk," said 'Urwa, "But I am obliged to him for a favour which I have not yet been able to return."

'Urwa was talking to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in a familiar manner and, as usual with the Arabs in the course of a conversation, would often try to get hold of the Prophet's beard. Mughīra Ibn Shu'ba who was standing armed behind the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) could not bear it and said to 'Urwa, "Hold your hand off, or it will not move back if stretched out again." 'Urwa recognized Mughīra and said, "O' you treacherous fellow. Have I not been helpful to you in getting

over your treachery." (Mughīra had murdered some men whose blood-money had been paid by 'Urwa).

'Urwa was deeply touched by the marvellous devotion of the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). On his return to the Quraish he said, "I have attended the courts of Hiracleus, the Chosroes and the Negus, but could nowhere see such devotion and ecstasy of love : pin-drop silence reigns when Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) talks, none can dare to gaze at him ; when he performs ablution, numbers rush up to take the water dropping down ; when he spits his sputum is received on palms of hands and rubbed on faces.[1]

As nothing was definitely settled, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent Kharrāsh Ibn Umayya to the Quraish. The Quraish killed the camel he was riding, which belonged to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself, and should have done the same to Kharrāsh had not the allied tribes intervened and given him a chance to escape with his life.

The Quraish now sent a party to attack the Muslims. They were, however, captured, but set free. Their offence was serious, but nothing could be too serious to be forgiven by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who was all mercy. The Holy Qur'ān refers to it in these words :

> "And He it is Who held back their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Mecca after He had given you victory over them.[2] (48 : 24)

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Book Conditions of Holy War, peace with those at war—Sulaimān.

2. Opinions differ regarding the occasion when this verse was revealed. This being the most trustworthy view—Sulaimān.

Bai'at al-Riḍwān

Next the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) chose 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) to settle peace terms. But 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) begged to be excused as the Quraish were thirsting for his blood and he had none of his tribesmen in Mecca to shield him. Ultimately the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent 'Uthmān (Allāh be pleased with him), who went to Mecca under the protection of a relation (Abbān Ibn Sa'īd). 'Uthmān (Allāh be pleased with him) conveyed to the Quraish the message of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Quraish put him under house arrest, but the rumour ran that he had been murdered. When the news was brought to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), he declared that it was their duty to avenge 'Uthmān's murder. He sat underneath a cactus tree and asked the Companions to pledge their lives. The Companions, including women, came forward, overwhelmed with emotion and offering their hands in token of their pledge. This was a great event in the history of Islam and is known as Bai'at al-Riḍwān. *Sūra Fath* (Victory), a Chapter in the Qur'ān, speaks of it with a mention of the tree :

> "Assuredly well pleased was Allāh with the believers when they swore fealty unto thee under the tree, and they knew that which was in their hearts, wherefore He sent down tranquillity on them and rewarded them with a victory near at hand." **(48 : 18)**

Later on it was discovered that the rumour was baseless. The Quraish deputed Shuail Ibn 'Amr as their intermediary. He was eloquent of speech and had been called *Khatīb al-Quraish* (the Orator of the Quraish).[1] He was instructed to insist that peace could be made only on condition that the

1. Zurqānī.

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) went back that year.

Suhail came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and had a long talk with him. Ultimately they agreed on certain terms and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) to write them down. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) began with "*Bismillah ir-Rahmān ir-Rahīm*" (In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful) at the top.

It was customary with the Arabs to preface their writings with the words "*Bismika Allahummā*" (with the name of Thee, O' God), and they were not familiar with *Bismillah ir-Rahmān ir-Rahīm*. Suhail therefore insisted that the customary phrase should be put down instead of "*Bismillah ir-Rahmān ir-Rahīm*", and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave his consent. The next sentence was: "This is a treaty agreed on by Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh." Suhail protested to the Prophet, "If we had acknowledged you to be the Messenger of Allāh, there would have been no dispute at all. You should dictate your own name and that of your father." "I know", said the Prophet, "you do not believe in me ; but I call Allāh to witness that I am His Messenger." He then ordered 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) to write his name without any epithet. In submission to the master none could excel 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him). Love, however, knows occasions when it refuses to obey. "Never will I rub off the words", exclaimed 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him). "All right", said the Prophet, "show me where it is." 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) placed his finger at the place, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself rubbed off the words, "the Messenger of Allāh."[1]

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* makes no mention of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) or of his speech. These details are given in Bukhārī's book al-Maghāzī, Chapter 'Umrat al-Qada'. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* as well corroborates this event.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not know reading or writing, hence he was called "*Ummi*" or illiterate. Muslim, however, says that he rubbed off the words, "the Messenger of Allāh", and put instead, "Ibn 'Abdullāh" (son of 'Abdullāh). This version in Muslim happens to run contrary to an accepted fact, giving rise to a controversy. But a man who has occasions to look at written word every now and then in daily life, though illiterate in the common sense, may learn to make out or scribe his own name. There is no doubt that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was illiterate which was a matter of pride for him, and the Qur'ān appends this epithet as a mark of distinction and respect. It says :

> "Those who follow the apostle, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written down with them in the *Torah* and the *Injīl*." (7 : 157)

The terms of the treaty were as follows :

1. The Muslims shall go back this year.
2. They may visit next year but shall stay for three days only.
3. They shall not come bearing arms except the sword.
4. None of the Muslims already residing in Mecca shall they take with them, nor shall they disallow any Muslim wishing to be left at Mecca to do that.
5. If any one from Mecca goes over to Medīna, shall be returned back to Mecca. But if an unbeliever or a converted Muslim comes over to Mecca, he shall not be delivered back to the Muslims.[1]

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1. All these terms besides being reported by almost all the books on history, are also given in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter "Treaty of Hudaibiya."

6. The tribes of Arabia shall be free to enter into alliance with any party they like.

Apparently these conditions were unfavourable to the Muslims. By mere coincidence, while the treaty was going to be recorded, Abū Jandal, son of Suhail, a convert to Islam, who had been kept as a prisoner by the Meccans and severely tortured, managed to come up with fetters on his feet. As he came he fell prostrate before the Muslims. "O' Muhammad", cried Suhail, "here is the first opportunity for you to show how you observe the terms of the treaty. Hand over this man to us according to our agreement." "The agreement", said the Prophet, "has not yet been written down." "We do not want peace then", replied Suhail. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) requested him to let Abū Jandal stay where he was. But Suhail refused his repeated requests, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had to give way at last. Abū Jandal had been beaten black and blue and bore the marks on his body. He uncovered his wounds to the Muslims saying, "O' brethren in faith, do you want me to go on suffering like this. I have embraced Islam. Are you going to deliver me into the hands of the infidels again ?" His words touched the Muslims to the quick. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) could no longer restrain himself. He came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the following dialogue ensued :

"O' Messenger of Allāh, are you not the true bearer of God's Message ?" asked 'Umar.

"Verily, I am", replied the Prophet.

"Are we not on the right ?" again asked 'Umar.

"Yes we are", was the Prophet's reply.

"Why should we then bear all this insult for our religion ?" 'Umar protested.

"I am the Messenger of Allāh," said the Prophet, "and can't go against His Will. Allāh will help me."

"Had you not said", 'Umar asked, "that we shall perform an ambulation round the Ka'ba ?"

"But", answered the Prophet, "I had not said we shall do it this very year."

'Umar got up and came to Abū Bakr ; and talked the same thing over. Abū Bakr told him that the Prophet being the Messenger of Allāh acted as he was bidden.[1]

All his life 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) was sorry for the insolent words that had escaped his lips. To atone for it, he offered prayers, observed fasts, and gave alms to the poor and freedom to slaves. Bukhārī makes a brief reference to all this, but Ibn Ishāq has it in detail.

To face this situation was a highly perilous ordeal for the fidelity of the Companions. On one side Islam, as it seemed stood disgraced. Abū Jandal in fetters was appealing to the faithful, 1,400 strong and all aflame with rage. The least hint from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) could see the swords at play to decide the dispute once for all. On the other hand, the treaty had been signed which had to be honoured as a moral duty. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) looked towards Abū Jandal and said, "Abū Jandal, have patience. God will open out a way for you and the other oppressed ones. Now that peace has been concluded, we cannot violate it."[2] Abū Jandal had to return in chains as before.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) now asked the Companions to slaughter the animals at the same place. Broken at heart, they felt disinclined and

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book al-Shurut.
2. Ibn Hishām.

none got up. As mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*,[1] the Prophet repeated his words three times, yet none would move. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) then retired to the house where he had put up and complained to his wife, Umm Salama (Allāh be pleased with her). She advised him to ask no one to do it, but to go out, slaughter his own animals and have his hair cut and then to put off the *Ihrām* (the pilgrim's robe). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came out and had his hair cut. As the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did that, it was felt that the decision was final and could not be altered. Then all of them put their *Ihrām* off and slaughtered their animals.

For three days after the treaty the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stayed on at Hudaibiya. On the way back was revealed the chapter beginning with the verse :

> "Verily We ! a victory We have given thee, a manifest victory....." (48 : 1)

What had so far been considered a sorry reverse by the Muslims was declared by God to have been a triumph. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) and repeated to him the revealed verse. "Is it a triumph ?" exclaimed 'Umar in surprise ; and the Prophet replied that so it was. As reported in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 'Umar felt quite satisfied and comforted with this reply.[2] The mystery was solved by later developments.

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book al-Shurūt,

2. The events connected with the peace of Hudaibiya have been given in detail in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, not under the Ghazwat, the proper place, but in the book entitled "*Shurūt*" or Conditions. It is for this reason that they escaped the notices of the historians. The Ghazwat have them sparsely mentioned, which we have incorporated. Further details are borrowed from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and Ibn Hishām.

Hitherto the Muslims and the non-believers had not mixed together. Peace encouraged free intercourse. Family ties and trade relations brought the unbelievers to Medīna, where they stayed for months in free contact with the Muslims, and by the way talked over religious matters. Moreover, every member of the Muslim community was then a paragon of sincerity, goodness, virtue and pure morals. The Muslims who went to Mecca presented a similar picture. All this served as a magnetic force drawing the unbelievers nearer to Islam. Historians say that during the period between this treaty and the Fall of Mecca the numbers converted exceeded all previous record. Khālid, the conqueror of Syria and 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ, the conqueror of Egypt, got converted during this period.

The condition that those who fled from Mecca would be returned, related only to men, not to women. Concerning women the following verse was revealed :

> "O you who believe, when believing women come unto you as emigrants, examine them. Allāh is the best Knower of their faith. Then if ye know them to be true believers, send them not back unto the infidels, they are not lawful unto them, nor are they lawful unto them. And give them that which they have expanded. Nor is it any crime in you if you marry them, when ye have given them their hires. And hold not to the ties of the infidel women, and ask back that which ye have expanded, and let them ask back that which they have expanded. That is the judgment of Allāh, He judgeth between you. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise." **(60 : 10)**

The helpless among the Muslims, left at Mecca would often flee to Medīna to escape the tortures inflicted by the infidels. The first to flee was 'Utba Ibn Ubaid (Abū Basīr). The Quraish deputed two men to fetch him back. They came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and asked him to return their man. The Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allāh be upon him) advised 'Utba to go back. "Are you sending me back to the unbelievers", protested Abū Basīr, "Only to have heathenism forced on me." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "God shall help you out." 'Utba was obliged to return under the escort of the two infidels. On reaching Dhul Halifa, 'Utba killed one of his custodians, the other made way to Medīna and complained to the Prophet. Abū Basīr also followed after him. "You kept your promise and sent me back," said he, "now the responsibility does not rest on you." Saying this he left Medīna and settled near Dhul Halifa on the sea-coast, at a place known as 'īs. The helpless and tortured Muslims in Mecca came to know of this place of refuge and escaped to it. In a short time, they rose in numbers till they were strong enough to intercept the Syria-bound trade caravans of the Quraish. The booty they got was the means of their subsistence.

Faced with the new situation, the Quraish wrote to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) abrogating this clause of the treaty. They would not now stand in the way if a Meccan wished to migrate to Medīna. Now the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) wrote to all those homeless Muslims to come to Medīna. Accordingly Abū Jandal, Abū Basīr and their companions came over and settled at Medīna. The trade route was again safe for the Quraish.[1]

Among the women, Umm Kulthūm, the daughter of a Meccan chief, 'Uqba Ibn Mu'ait, who had embraced Islam migrated to Medīna. Just then came her two brothers, 'Umara and Walīd. They requested the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to return their sister, but the Prophet did not allow. The Companions now divorced the wives who were still at Mecca and had not forsaken heathenism.

1. The details have been borrowed from *Khamīs* which has quoted from *Iktifa' Kala'ī*.

RULERS INVITED TO ISLAM

(The close of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th year of the Hijra)

Hudaibiya having promised a span of peace, it was time to make the message of Islam known to the world. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) one day called together all his Companions and addressed them thus : "Listen, O' people, God has sent me as His Messenger and Apostle of mercy for all the world. Mind that you do not fall into dissensions like the disciples of Jesus. Go and convey the Divine message from me." Then he despatched letters to the Byzantine Emperor, the Emperor of Persia, the King of Egypt, and the Chiefs of Arabia inviting them all to the fold of Islam. The names of those who carried the letters with the names of the addressees are given below :[1]

1. Dehyah Kalbī to the Byzantine Emperor.
2. 'Abdullāh Ibn Hudhaifa Sehmī to the Chosroes of Irān.
3. Hātib Ibn Balta'a to 'Azīz (Potipher) of Egypt.
4. 'Amr Ibn Umayya to the Negus of Ethiopia.
5. Salīt Ibn 'Amr to the chiefs of Yamama.
6. Shujā' Ibn Wahb al-Asadī to Hārith Ghassānī, the chief of Syria.

A few years back, the Iranians had invaded the Syrian territory and defeated the Romans of Byzantium. It has

1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1559, and Ibn Hishām.

been referred to in the Holy Qur'ān in these words : "The Byzantians have been overcome in a nearer land, and they, after the overcoming of them, shall soon overcome. In some few years, Allah's is the command before and after." (30 : 24) Hiracleus of Rome (Byzantium) collected a large force with huge preparations to avenge his defeat, and routed the Iranians. To offer thanks for this victory, he came from Himṣ to the holy city of Jerusalem, marching in state. As he marched the ground under his feet was covered with carpets and the carpets strewn with flowers all along the route.[1]

The Arab rulers of Syria, who held sway under the overlordship of Hiracleus, were the Ghassānides, with their capital at Basra or Busra, in the Damascus region (now known as Hūran). In those days Hārith Ghassānī was the ruler. Dehyah Kalbī delivered the Prophet's letter to Hārith, who sent it to Hiracleus at Jerusalem. On receipt of the letter Hiracleus ordered his men to fetch to him any person coming from Arabia. By chance Abū Sufyān, with some other Arab traders, was in those days staying at Ghaza. The Emperor's men brought them from Ghaza.

Hiracleus held his court with all the display of majesty and sat crowned in the midst of monks, priests and patriarchs lined up on all sides. Addressing the Arabs he asked them who was related to the new Prophet. Abū Sufyān declared that he was his kinsman. After this ensued the following dialogue :

Hiracleus : What is the family status of this Prophet ?

Abū Sufyān : He is of noble birth.

Hiracleus : Did any one else from the family ever claim to be a prophet ?

1. The whole story of Hiracleus has been taken from *Fath al-Bārī*, commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. In *Bukhārī* itself the fact is briefly described. Other details have been taken by Hafiz Ibn Hajar from other sources.

Abū Sufyān : No.

Hiracleus : Has there been a king in his family ?

Abū Sufyān : No.

Hiracleus : Are the followers of this Prophet influential persons or men of weak position ?

Abū Sufyān : They are weak people.

Hiracleus : Is the number of his followers increasing or diminishing ?

Abū Sufyān : It is increasing.

Hiracleus : Have you ever found him telling lies ?

Abū Sufyān : No.

Hiracleus : Does he ever go back on his word ?

Abū Sufyān : He has never done it so far. But it is to be seen if he keeps the new treaty with us.

Hiracleus : Have you ever fought against him ?

Abū Sufyān : Yes.

Hiracleus : With what results ?

Abū Sufyān : Sometimes we won and sometimes he was the winner.

Hiracleus : What does he teach ?

Abū Sufyān : He tells us to worship One God, to associate not others with Him, to offer Prayers, to lead a chaste life, to speak the truth and to love and be kind to our relations.

After this dialogue through an interpreter, Hiracleus said, "You say he belongs to a noble family, and prophets always come from noble families. You said that none from his family ever claimed to be a prophet. Had it been so, I should have thought his claim to have been the outgrowth of family associations. You admit that none in his family has

ever been a king. Had this been the case, I should have supposed him to be ambitious for power. You admit that he has never told a lie, and one who does not tell a lie to his fellow men cannot be expected to weave a lie about God. You say that his followers are weak, and the early followers of every prophet have been the poor people. You say that his religion is gaining ground, a true faith always does so. You admit that he has never deceived any one, and prophets never deceive. You say that he teaches prayer, piety and chaste living. If this is true, then his domain will extend to where my feet are placed. I did have a conviction that a prophet must be born, but was not sure that he would be born in Arabia. I would have washed his feet if I could go there." After this speech he ordered the letter of the Prophet to be read out.[1] The contents of the letter were :

> "In the name of God, Most Compassionate and Merciful. From Muhammad, the bondsman of Allāh and His Messenger, addressed to Hiracleus, the Emperor. Peace to him who follows the guidance. After that I call thee to embrace Islam, which done, thou shalt be safe and be doubly rewarded by God. But if thou heedest not then thou shalt have on thee the sins of thy subjects. O' Followers of the Book, come to a doctrine commonly held by you and us, that we worship not any but Allāh, that none of us take others as our Lords ; but if you turn back, then bear witness that we believe."

Hiracleus' talk with Abū Sufyān had made the patriarchs and the courtiers very angry. They were further enraged at the recital of the letter. Realising the situation, Hiracleus dismissed the Arabs. He had seen the light ; but the faint glimmer was soon dimmed in the shadows of royal

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1. All this detailed talk is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* in various Chapters, in the beginning as well as in the Chapter on *Jihād*.

paraphernalia.[1]

The letter addressed to the Chosroes of Irān, through 'Abdullāh Ibn Hudhaifa, ran thus :

> "In the name of God, the Most Compassionate and Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh to Kisra (Chosroes), the Emperor of Irān. Peace to him who followeth the guidance, believeth in Allāh and His Messenger and beareth witness that there is One God and that He hath sent me as His Messenger to all the people of the world that every mortal living be taught to fear Allāh. Embrace Islam and thou shalt be saved ; else thou shalt suffer for the sins of the Magis."

Chosroes Parwez was a great monarch. The Persian court had never shone with such grandeur as it did under him. As a rule in the non-Arab countries, a letter addressed to a king

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1. In *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal (p. 76, Vol. IV) it is mentioned that Hiracleus sent his own ambassadors carrying his own written reply along with Dehyah. The ambassador was also told certain questions which he was to ask the Prophet. This man put the questions. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) answered them ; but still this ambassador returned without embracing Islam.

   But this report says that the Prophet called Mu'āwiya to read the letter of the Hiracleus ; and Mu'āwiya had not even come into the fold of Islam by that time. Note by S. Sulaimān Nadvi.

   As mentioned in *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. VIII, p. 97 and Zurqanī, Vol. III, pp. 88 & 89, this incident seems to have been another one, much after the incident referred to above. In this report it is clearly mentioned that such an incident happened after the battle of Tabūk ; and the battle of Tabūk took place after the Fall of Mecca *i.e.*, in the 9th year of the Hijra (641 C.E.). Hadrat Mu'āwiya had embraced Islam one or two years before this battle, *i.e.*, in the year of the Fall of Mecca or near about that year. But none reports Mu'āwiya's participation in the battle of Tabūk. This report along with its chain is mentioned in the *Kitāb al-Amval*, Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim Ibn Salām, Cairo Edition on p. 255.

bore the name of the king at the top. But the letter received from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) began with the name of Allāh followed by that of the Messenger of Allāh, according to the Arab custom. Kisra (Chosroes) took it as an insult to himself and said, "A slave of mine and writing to me in this fashion." Then he tore the letter to pieces. In a very short time the mighty empire met the same fate. The poet Nizāmī, in his Shīrīn Khusro, has described the incident at length with Islamic fervour.[1]

What happened next is this. On receiving the letter Chosroes (Khusro Parvez) addressed an order (*Farmān*) to Bādhān, his viceroy in Yaman, to despatch some one to Hijāz to fetch the new prophet to his presence. Bādhān commissioned two men, Babvaih and Khar Khasra, to go to Medīna. They arrived at Medīna and informed the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that Kisra (Chosroes II) the mighty monarch, had called him to his court; adding that if he disobeyed, the Emperor would destroy him and lay waste his country. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "Go and tell him that the dominions of Islam shall extend to the capital of Kisra."[2] When the messengers were back in Yaman, the news came that Shiravaih (also pronounced as Shirooyah), son of Chosroes had murdered his father, the Emperor.

An invitation to Islam was sent to the Negus of Ethiopia as well. The Negus wrote in reply that he bore witness to the truth of the Prophet's message. Ja'far Tayyār, who had migrated to Ethiopia was there at that time, and the Negus solemnised his conversion to Islam at the hands of Ja'far. Ibn Ishāq has it that Negus sent his son with sixty attendants to pay their respects to the Prophet (peace and blessings of

1. The long piece of verse quoted by the author is advisedly omitted—Translator.

2. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1571.

Allāh be upon him) ; but the ship carrying them sank in the sea and the party was drowned.[1]

Historians say that in the ninth year of the Hijra the Negus died, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who was then at Medīna offered for him funeral prayers in absentia. This is not, however, historically true. *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim* definitely says that the Negus whose funeral prayers were offered by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in absentia was not this one but his predecessor. (But Ibn Qayyim has seconded the historian's report and attributed the last portion of Muslim's statement to the narrator's whim.)[2]

The Muslims who had migrated to Ethiopia included Umm Habība, daughter of Abū Sufyān and sister of Amīr Mu'āwiya. Her husband had been dead. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) wrote to the Negus to propose to her on his behalf and to send her to Medīna. The Negus deputed Khālid Ibn Sa'īd Ibn al-'Ās, and he on behalf of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) entered into the nuptial contract. The Negus paid 400 gold coins as dower to Umm Habiba on behalf of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Thus married Umm Habiba set sail for Medīna and disembarked at the port of Medīna,[3] reaching the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) when he was at Khaibar. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would often ask Umm Habiba to speak to him about the Negus.[4]

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1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1569.

2. *Zād al-Ma'ād*—Sulaimān Nadvī.

3. Here the language seems ambiguous. Perhaps the 'Allama means to say that she set sail for the port of Ḥijāz. In Ibn Hishām the name of the port is given as Jeddah. See Ibn Hishām.

4. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1570.

In reply to the Prophet's letter, the Potiphar or the 'Aziz of Egypt (also known as Muqauqis) addressed the following in Arabic :

> "To Muhammad Ibn 'Abdullah from Muqauqis, the chief of Qibt. Peace to you. I have read your letter and have noted the contents. I knew this much that a prophet was to come. But I had expected him to appear in Syria. I have extended an honourable welcome to your messenger and am sending two girls[1] who are highly respected among the Qibtis (Egyptians) and I offer as a present some cloth and a mule to ride on."

Notwithstanding all that, the Potiphar of Egypt did not embrace Islam. Of the two girls sent by him, one was Marīya Qibtiya, who was married to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and the other Sīrīn, who was married to Hasan ; the mule was named Duldul, frequently mentioned in books on traditions. In the battle of Hunain, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was on the back of this very animal. Tabarī says that Marīya Qibtiya and Sīrīn were real sisters, and through the teachings of Hātib Ibn Abi Balta'a, who had been sent as messenger to the Potiphar of Egypt, both had embraced Islam before reaching the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). What one has to note here is that these ladies were not slave girls and that they had already accepted Islam. We should hence conclude that Marīya Qibtiya entered the Prophet's household as a duly wedded wife, and not as a slave girl.

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1. We have translated the word "*Juriyah*" in the original sense meaning girl. In Arabic it may be used for a slave girl as well Historians have on this account declared Marīya to have been a slave girl. But the words used by the Potiphar about these girls are 'Who are highly respected among the Qibtis or the Egyptians." These are not the words that may possibly be applied to slave girls.

Letters sent to the chiefs of Arabia were responded to in different ways. Hawdha Ibn 'Ali, the chief of Yaman wrote in reply, "What you say is very good. If you make me a partner in government, I am willing to follow you." Islam had not come to encourage lust for dominion ; so the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Were it the tiniest piece of land, I would not part with it ?"

Hārith Ghassānī, was the chief of the Syrian region and ruled over the neighbouring Arabs under the suzerainty of the Byzantines. He got enraged on reading the letter and ordered an army to get ready. The Muslims had to pay for the message by living for a long time under the threat of an attack from him, which ultimately terminated in the battles of Mūta and Tabūk.[1]

Miscellaneous Incidents of the Sixth Year of Hijra (637-638 C.E.)

Khalid and 'Amr Ibn al-'As Turn Muslim

God declared the Treaty of Hudaibiya to be a victory. It was not a temporal victory but a conquest of hearts. Islam needed peaceful conditions for its propagation, and this treaty created the desired atmosphere. Even its enemies thought the Muslims had gained. In all the battles so far fought between the Muslims and the Quraish, Khālid Ibn Walīd had towered high as a commander of the enemy forces. In the early days he held the command of the cavalry. It was he who made the Quraish stand their ground at Uhud when they had taken to flight. At Hudaibiya too the advance party of the Quraish was sent under his command. But even this military genius, the greatest of their commanders, could not remain invulnerable to the unfailing shafts of Islam.

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1. The names of the tribal chiefs, to whom these invitations were addressed, shall be found in the next volume *Missionary Activities* – Sulaimān.

After the Treaty of Hudaibiya, Khālid set out from Mecca to Medīna. On the way he met with 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ, who asked him where he was going? Khālid told him that he was going to embrace Islam, for he could not stand off any more. 'Amr said that he also felt like that. Both came together to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and got religion.[1] The genius that had so far worked against Islam was now won over to serve its cause.

At the time of the Fall of Mecca, when Khālid marched past the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), commanding a Muslim detachment, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked who he was? He was told that it was Khālid. "O' he is the Sword of Allāh[2] (*Saifullāh*)", said the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

At the battle of Mūta, the moment Khālid took over command after Zaid Ibn Haritha and 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa, the Muslims were all out of danger.

In the days of the Caliphs Khālid, seized Syria from the Byzantines, and the other ('Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ) conquered Egypt.

1. *Isābah*, Hāfiz Ibn Hajar on the authority of Ibn Ishāq.

2. Margoliouth, p. 536.

KHAIBAR

(End of the 6th or Early in the 7th year of the Hijra—638 C.E.).

Perhaps Khaibar is the Hebrew word for a fort. The place is eight stages away from Medīna. Doughty, a European traveller, stayed here for several months in 1877 C.E. He gives its distance from Medīna as two hundred miles. The oasis on the border of which Khaibar is situated is a very fertile spot. Here the Jews had constructed a number of strong forts ; the ruins of some of their fortifications are still extant.

Khaibar was the greatest centre of Jewish power in Arabia. Here did the chiefs of the Banū Nadīr, when banished from Medīna, take their abode, and work up the whole of Arabia against Islam, of which the first outcome was the battle of the Trenches. One of these chiefs, Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, was killed in the battle of Quraiza, and was succeeded by Abū Rāfi', Sallām Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq who was a prosperous trader and a man of great influence. The Ghatfān tribe, one of the most influential in Arabia, has its habitations adjacent to Khaibar and had always been in alliance with the Jews.[1] In the sixth year of the Hijra, Sallām himself approached the Ghatfān and the other tribes in that region to mobilize them against the Muslims, and succeeded in raising a huge army to attack Medīna.[2] This activity was reported to

1. Ibn Khaldūn, Vol. II, Account of Arabian Tribes and *Khamīs*, Vol. II, p. 43, Chapter "Ghazwa Khaibar"—Sulaimān.

2. Ibn Sa'd, p 66. His actual words are : "Abū Rāfi' had instigated the Arab infidels in the neighbourhood to make war and mobilize a

(*Contd. on* p. 157

the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and with his connivance Sallām was murdered, while asleep in his fort, by 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Atīk of Khazraj, in the month of Ramaḍān, in the sixth year of the Hijra. After Sallām, the Jews acknowledged Usair Ibn Rizām (some say it is Asīr) to be their chief. He said to the Jews, assembled at a tribal meeting, that the measures taken by his predecessors were all useless ; the best way was to attack the very capital of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and that was the line he would follow.[1] Usair paid visit to the Ghatafān and other tribes and got a huge army ready. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) heard of it but not believing the rumours, he sent 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa to Khaibar to ascertain the truth. Accordingly, 'Abdullāh proceeded with a small party, and secretly managed to overhear Usair himself talking over his plans. He reported all that to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who despatched thirty men with 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa to Khaibar. They met Usair and told him that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had sent them with the proposal that, if he should present himself before him, the government of Khaibar would be given to him. Usair set out from Khaibar with an equal number of men. As a precautionary measure, this mixed caravan moved in twos, one Muslim rider being paired with a Jew. On reaching Qar Qarā, Usair's mind misgave him. He put out his hand to snatch away the sword from 'Abdullāh Ibn Unais.[2] "O' enemy

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Contd. from p. 156)

great multitude to fight against Rāfi', has that Abū Rāfi' was used to tormenting the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and helping his enemies. A description of this help appears in detail in *Fath al-Bārī* on the authority of 'Urwa, Vol. VII, p. 363.

1. Zurqānī, 'Ala al-Mawāhib, Vol. II, p. 196, Egypt—Sulaimān.

2. Either it should be 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa, or it may be 'Abdullāh Ibn Unais who too may have accompanied them—Translator.

of God", exclaimed 'Abdullāh, "Do you wish to go back on your word ?"[1] Saying that he urged his animal ; and getting within the striking distance, cut his thigh with a stroke of the sword. Usair fell from his horse, but as he did so, he managed to wound 'Abdullāh. The Muslims, now taking to offensive, fell upon the Jews with the result that all but one were killed. This took place towards the end of the sixth or in the first month of the seventh year of the Hijra, *i.e.*, 628 C.E.

Now Khaibar had the most dangerous and the stiffest adversary. These were the people who had gone to Mecca and with the help of the Quraish stirred up a storm of revolt from one end of Arabia to the other. That storm had virtually rocked Medīna, the very centre of Islam. The attempt had failed, yet the force then at work were still operative.

Of those who had been instrumental in bringing about the battle of the Trenches, the most influential had been the family of Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq. They belonged to the tribe of the Banū Nadīr and had settled there when those people had been deported from Medīna. They had taken possession of the famous fort of Qamūs. Sallām Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq, already mentioned, had been the head of this family. His nephew, Kināna Ibn al-Rabī, Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq succeeded him as the head.

The Jews of Khaibar were hatching plots against Islam in collusion with the Ghatafān and also keeping themselves well-informed of the affairs at Medīna through the hypocrites, who had always encouraged them to hope that the Muslims could never get the better of them.

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1. All these details have been taken from *Tabaqāt*. In many books it is recorded that 'Abdullāh Ibn Unais himself took the initiative and murdered Usair Ibn Rizām. But the truth is what has been mentioned in *Tabaqāt* ; and this seems to have been the cause of this encounter.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had a wish to come to an agreement with these people, and with this end in view, he had sent 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa. But the Jews were an unrelenting and a suspicious lot ; moreover, the hypocrites were always goading them. In the mean time, the arch-hypocrite 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Ubbay Ibn Salūl, sent them word that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was planning an attack ; but that they had nothing to fear, because the Muslims were a handful of men without arms, and did not count much. Having received this message the Jews sent Kināna and Hawdha Ibn Qais to the Ghatafān asking them to join them in the attack on Medīna and promising to them half the yield of the oasis. The Ghatafān according to a report, accepted these terms.[1]

The Banū Fazāra, an offshoot of the Ghatafān were very powerful. Hearing that the Jews of Khaibar were preparing for an attack against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), they came to Khaibar and offered to fight the Muslims along with them. On receipt of this news, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) wrote to the Banū Fazāra to desist from helping the Jews of Khaibar and promised to give them their share after the conquest of Khaibar. But the Banū Fazāra refused.[2]

Ghazwa Dhī Qarad
Muharram 7, A.H. (638 C.E.)

The Banū Ghatafān now in alliance with the Jews, made a beginning by attacking the pasture land of Dhī Qarad, which was the place where the camels of Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) used to graze. Some men of

1. *Khamīs*, Vol. II, p. 43. Generally it is reported that the Ghatafān declined it for fear of the Muslims. Nevertheless it is evident that this impartiality could not be relied on—Sulaimān.

2. This incident has been given in *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, as borrowed from Mūsā Ibn 'Uqba's *al-Maghazī*. The actual words of Mūsā have been quoted there.

their tribe, under the leadership of 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn 'Uyaina, raided the place and took away twenty camels, killing Abū Dharr's son who kept watch over the herd, and taking his wife prisoner. When chased by the Muslims they made their way into the mountain pass, where 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn, the commander of the Ghatafān force was ready to help them. Salama Ibn Akwa', a Companion who was a good marksman was the first to know of this. Raising the cry, *"Wa Sabāhā ho"* (O Friends) he overtook the enemy when their camels were having a drink. Driven by the shower of arrows, the intruders took to their heels. Salama chased them and succeeded in wresting all the camels. Salama came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said, "I have left the enemy thirsting for water. Given a 100 men, I can take them all captive and bring them here." But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who was all mercy, replied "When you have power, forgive and be tolerant."[1] Three days after this was fought the battle of Khaibar.[2]

The Campaign against Khaibar, in comparison with the battles so far fought, bore a distinct character. Historians,

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1. It has also been mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Further details are taken from Ibn Sa'd and Ibn Isḥāq.

2. Historians have placed this incident a year before the battle of Khaibar. But Tabarī, on the authority of Salma Ibn Akwa', the hero of this battle, and Bukhārī have dated it three days before the battle of Khaibar. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, while dealing with the version of the historians, remarks, "All this leads us to conclude that the date of Ghazwa Dhī Qarad as mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* is more authentic than the one mentioned by the chroniclers." He has tried to reconcile these contradictory reports by holding that 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn attacked Dhī Qarad twice. The attack mentioned by the historians was the first and this seems quite probable. Generally the historians do not show much concern for the causes of an incident—let alone Khaibar. They care little how the events developed and what causes led to a battle. Research, however, proves that all these incidents are the links of a single chain.

though they have failed to realize the situation that accounted for it, have however, recorded the facts that make for this distinction, without taking note of their significance. To begin with, on the eve of the march to Khaibar, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) announced, "Only those are to accompany us who are desirous of taking part in *Jihād*."

The wars fought so far had all been purely defensive. This was the first campaign when non-Muslims were reduced to subjection and the foundations of a state were laid. The main object of Islam is the propagation of its message. It has little to do with making wars or subjecting peoples, provided they do not cross the path of its peaceful appeal to mankind. It can be perfectly content with a treaty to maintain peaceful relations, of which we have so many instances. However, in case people are determined to offer opposition and wipe it away, it has to unsheath its sword for self-protection and reduce them to a state of subordination. Khaibar was the first territory conquered under such exigency.

When we come to the close of our narration of military exploits, we shall have occasion to discuss, at some length how people still share the pagan conception of warfare[1] being paying business to live upon, an idea that persisted till the battle of Khaibar. Khaibar was the first engagement when the

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1 People here should be taken to mean the dissemblers, for they joined battles only for the sake of booty, avoiding participation when prospects of booty were poor, or a stiff resistance was to be expected. These two reasons had kept them back from going to Hudaibiya at which God expressed His displeasure in the *Sūra al-Fatah*, declaring that in future they were not to be allowed to join even such expeditions as promised a gain. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had it announced that only those were to take part in this Ghazwa who meant to fight for the glorification of the Word of Allāh and not material goods. Zurqānī and Ibn Sa'd, Chapter, "Ghazwa Khaibar"—Sulaimān.

folly of this idea was exposed. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) limited the invitation only to those whose motive was to fight for the cause and the glorification of the Word of Allāh.

In short, in order to check-mate the combined offensive of the Ghatafān and the Jews, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) started from Medīna in the first month of the seventh year of the Hijra.[1] Sabā' Ibn 'Urfata of Ghifār was left incharge of Medīna. Umm Salama, one of the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) accompanied him. The force numbered 1,600, including 200 horsemen, the rest being on foot. No flag worth the name was used as yet. Small banners served the purpose. For the first time the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), got three flags ready ; one was entrusted to Hubāb Ibn Mundhar, another to Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda, and the third, the Prophet's own flag made from the shroud of 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was given to 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him). The army set out with 'Āmir Ibn Akwa', the famous poet, at the head, reciting the following war-song :

> "O God, if Thou hadst not given us guidance we should not have been guided and should have neither given alms nor fasted. Our lives for Thee, O God, forgive us for our failure to obey Thee, and let comfort descend on us. We attend to the Call of the oppressed when we are called ; keep us firm when we meet in battle, people have appealed to us for help."[2]

The above couplets are quoted in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal adds a few others. The

1. Ibn Sa'd, *Maghāzī*, p. 177, says it was the month of Jamādī al-Awwal in the 7th year of Hijra, which in the light of the author's finding is incorrect.

2. These lines clearly indicate that the enemy had been the aggressor. Wording in these lines differ in various reports.

first two lines with a slight variation also appear in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* under Khaibar :

> "When those, who have high-handedly dealt with us, are, up to create mischief, we yield not to them, O' God, we cannot but seek Thy favours."

On the way the Muslim army came to a plain. The Companions raised the voice of *Allāhu Akbar* (God is Great). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), never missing an opportunity to tutor the followers and teach them the rules of right conduct, asked them not to be so vociferous, saying that they were not calling to a being hard of hearing or far from them, but that the One they invoked was ever present with them."[1]

A few ladies, of their own accord had joined the army. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know, called them and asked them why and with whose permission they were there. They said they had come to spin yarn with their wheels and help the army with their earnings, and that they had medicines with them and they would also pick up discharged arrows. When the booty was distributed, these women had their share. But what did this share consist of ? Did it consist of gold and precious stones ? Was it *Dirhams* or *Dinars* ? No it was mere dates and nothing else which these ladies received as did the rest of the army.

The foregoing story has been mentioned in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd, in the Chapter on Men and Women sharing Booty. Traditionists and chroniclers prove that women accompanied the Muslim armies on many occasions. They attended the wounded and fetched water for the thirsty. That 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) carried a water-skin, at Uhud and helped the wounded to a drink has already been spoken of. But it is Abū Dāwūd alone who makes a mention of Muslim ladies picking up arrows and passing them to the men in the

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Khaibar.

field ; but he records it with an unbroken chain of narrators of established integrity. Hence we need not question its authenticity. Moreover, it is not much to expect of Arab women.

It was already known that the tribe of Ghatafān was sure to come to the help of the Jews of Khaibar. Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) encamped at Rajī', midway between Ghatafān and Khaibar, and leaving the tents, equipage and the women there, the force proceeded towards Khaibar.[1] Hearing that the Muslim army was advancing towards Khaibar the Ghatafān marched fully armed, but turned back when they had gone a little way off as they realised that their own houses were in danger.[2]

There were six[3] forts at Khaibar.....Sālim, Qamūs, Nitāt, Qusārah, Shaqq and Marbatah....and as mentioned by Ya'qūbī they were manned by twenty thousand soldiers. Qamūs was the strongest and the best fortified. It was held by the famous Arab warrior Marhab, who was believed to be a match for a 1,000 horses.[4] There was also settled the family of Ibn Abi al-Huquaiq, who, when driven from Medīna, had worked its way to power and leadership.

The Muslim army arrived at Sahba' near Khaibar. Here the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) halted and offered the belated noon prayer. Then he asked for food. The provisions consisted of mere parched barley ground into flour, which was stirred in water and taken by the Prophet

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1. All these details are given in *Mu'jam al-Buldan* in the description of Raji'.

2. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1575. Actual words are also given.

3. Here the author has given the number of these forts to have been six. As a matter of fact they were eight : Nitāt, al-Shaqq (in Qamūs it is al-Shiqq), al-Nā'im, al-Kutaiba, al-Watih, al-Sulalim, al-Mamus, and the fort of Sa'd Ibn Ma'ādh—Translator.

4. Ya'qūbī, Vol. II, p. 56.

(peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and all others.[1] Before the nightfall, the forces stood in sight of the buildings of Khaibar. There the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered a halt and then prayed as follows :

> "O' God, we pray to Thee for the well-being of this village, of its inmates and all that is in it ; and we seek Thy shelter from their mischief."[2]

Ibn Hishām records that it was usual with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to pray in that way before he entered a town. In keeping with the Prophet's principle not to make a night attack, the army spent the night there.[3] In the morning they entered Khaibar. The Jews sent their women to a place of safety and stored their provisions in the fort of Nā'im, while the fighting forces were stationed in the forts of Nitāt and Qamūs. Salām Ibn Mishkam was ill, yet he took a most active part and himself joined the army at Nitāt.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would fain avoid fighting even then ; but the elaborate war preparations of the Jews ruled such a course out. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called the companions and delivered a rousing sermon. Khamīs says : "And when the Prophet felt sure that the Jews were bent upon fighting, he advised the Companions and exhorted them for war."

Nā'im was the first to be stormed. Muhammad Ibn Muslima (also read as Maslama) launched a daring attack and fought for a long time, but had to stop for rest on account of excessive heat. While sitting in the shade by the side of the

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.*
2. Ibn Hishām.
3. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the words are : "When he reached a place in the night he did not attack it—Chapter "Khaibar."

wall, he was crushed to death by a grinding stone which Kināna Ibn Rabī' Ibn Abi al-Huquaiq let fall from the parapet above. But the fort was soon taken.[1]

Nā'im fallen, other forts were easily captured. But Qamūs was the seat of Marhab. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) deputed Abū Bakr and 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with them) to attack it, but they met with no success. Tabarī says, 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) could not stand his ground when the Jews sallied forth. He complained to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) of cowardice on the part of men, whereas the men charged him with lack of courage.

This story comes to Tabarī through a report from 'Aūf. Many have declared him to be worthy of trust; but while quoting from him, Bundār used to observe that he was a "Rā'fidī" (*Shi'ah*) and a Satan, which is too harsh a word for him. However, it is agreed on all hands that he was a *Shi'ah*. A *Shi'ah* is not necessarily unreliable; yet a report declaring 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) to have taken to his heels, when handed down by a *Shi'ah*, loses its value. Furthermore, up in the chain 'Abdullah Ibn Buraida appears as a narrator, who reports it from his father, and the traditionists doubt the authenticity of all reports related by him on the authority of his father.

This much is, after all, certain that senior Companions were first commissioned with the task, but none was destined to bear the palm. As the siege drew on, one evening the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Tomorrow I give the flag to the man whom God shall crown with success, and he shall be one who loves God and His Prophet and whom God and His Prophet have blessed with their love."[2] It was a night of suspense for the Companions,

1. Ibn Hishām has mentioned this at two different places. We borrow these details from *Khamīs*.

2. These are the words of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

wondering who was to win this crown of glory. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), unambitious and above selfish considerations as he was and had never cared for power and leadership confessed, as mentioned by Bukhārī, under Merits of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him), that on this occasion his proud indifference had to give way.

In the morning all of a sudden were heard the words "Where is 'Ali ?" The summons was quite unexpected as 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) at that time was having sore eyes and every one knew that he was unable to fight. Any how, he came as he was summoned. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) applied saliva from his own lips and prayed for him. Then he was given the standard. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased him) asked, "Should I fight the Jews till they are converted ?" "Invite them to Islam gently", said the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), "if you made a single convert, it would be better than red camels."[1]

But the Jews would welcome neither peace nor Islam. Marhab came out of the fort reciting : "Khaibar knows I am Marhab, a seasoned veteran, full of daring and clad in arms."

Marhab had on his head a Yaman-made piece of armour yellow in colour, and wore a stone helmet over it. In olden days a round piece of stone hollowed inside served as a helmet.

In reply to Marhab, 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) recited the following war-song :

> "I am he whom his mother named *Haider* (in Arabic *Haider* means a lion) and like the lion of the jungle, I am dreadful and fearful to look at."

Stalking and strutting, Marhab stepped forward. But 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) came down upon him with

1. These facts are narrated at length in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.

his sword and dealt a blow that cut him through the skull down to the jaws, and the clatter of the blow was heard by the army behind.[1] The fall of this warrior was a momentuous event ; man's love of the miraculous has therefore, given currency to reports of a highly fabulous character about this fight. The Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl says, that Marhab tried to ward off the blow with his shield but the *Dhul-Fiqār* ('Ali's sword) sank deep down to the teeth, slashing the helmet and the head. Marhab slain, the Jews made a general attack. By chance the shield fell from the hand of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) and he pulled off the monolithic door of the fort and used it as a shield. When the battle was over, Abū Rāfi' with seven others tried to lift it, but could not even move it from its place. These reports have been quoted by Ibn Ishāq and Ḥākim, but they are mere coffee-house tales.[2] 'Allāma Sakhāvī in his *Maqasid Hasana* has characterised them as absurd stories. 'Allama Dhahabi, in *Mizān al-I'tidāl*, while giving an account of 'Ali Ibn Ahmad, has quoted this story with the remarks that it is a *Munkar* report. Ibn Hishām has quoted this story through various chains of narration. In one such narration a middle link is altogether missing. In another version, in addition to this omission, Buraida Ibn Sufyān whom Imām Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd and Dāraquṭni have declared to be unreliable, is one of the reporters.[3]

Ibn Isḥāq, Mūsa Ibn 'Uqba and Wāqidi say that Marhab was killed by Muḥammad Ibn Maslama. In *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* too we meet with a report to the same effect. But *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* credits 'Ali (Allāh be

1. Tabarī, p. 1579. These lines and a brief narration of facts also appear in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Ghazwa Khaibar.

2. The great 'Allāma's dislike for everything miraculous has led the great 'Allama use such words. The traditionists treat even *Munkar* reports to be dependable in matters of Sira—Translator.

3. *Mizān al-I'tidāl*, version of Buraida Ibn Sufyān.

pleased with him) with having killed Marhab and conquered Khaibar and this is the soundest of all the reports.

In short Qamūs fell to the Muslims after a siege of twenty days. The siege cost the Jews ninety-three lives including men like Hārith, Marhab, A'sir, Yāsir, 'Āmir, against fifteen Companions whose names have been given by Ibn Sa'd.

After the victory, the whole territory was taken into possession. The Jews requested to be allowed to retain their lands on payment of half the produce. This was granted. At harvest time, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) used to send 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa who divided the whole stock of grain into two equal lots and would ask the Jews to take any of the two. Surprised at his fair dealings, the Jews would often exclaim, "It is justice like this that holds in their places the earth and the heavens[1]. The whole land of Khaibar was distributed among the Muslim soldiers who had taken part in the battle, the Prophet's share being one-fifth of the whole, known as "*Khums.*" As commonly stated the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), in addition to the '*Khums*" (1/5) was also allowed a special share known as "Ṣafī." Hence it is said, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) took for himself Ṣafiyya, daughter of Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, set her free and then took her to wife.

Truth About Ṣafiyya

Some of the books on traditions and history state that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had first allotted her to Diḥyā Kalbī, when some one spoke of her beauty, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) got her from Kalbī, giving him seven slave-girls in return. Hostile critics have depicted it in the ugliest colours,

1. *Futūh al-Buldān*, Balādharī, Conquest of Khaibar and Tabarī, p. 1589. The story is also there in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd.

and with this much in a report to support them, they could very well do it.

In fact this story of Ṣafiyya has been narrated on the authority of Anas (Allāh be pleased with him). But Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) is the original source of several statements contradictory to one another. The report in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in connection with the battle of Khaibar says that after the fall of Khaibar, people praised the beauty of Ṣafiyya in the presence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and he took her for himself. The actual words are: "When the fort fell by the grace of Allāh, people praised the beauty of Ṣafiyya, the daughter of Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab whose husband had been killed in the battle, and the Prophet chose her for himself."

Again in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in the Chapter on Prayer and in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*,[1] in the Chapter on Freeing the Slave Girls, the same story has been narrated from the same source, Anas (Allāh be pleased with him), in a different way. It runs thus: "After the battle when the captives were brought together, Diḥyā Kalbī requested the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to let him have a slave girl out of them. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) allowed him to choose any he liked. Diḥya Kalbī chose Ṣafiyya. To this people objected and one said, O' Prophet of Allāh, you have given Ṣafiyya, daughter of Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab, to Diḥyā, she is a noble lady of the Quraiza and the Banū Nadīr, and fit for none but you."

Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set her free and married her. Both these reports originating from Anas (Allāh be pleased with him) are recorded in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd. The famous traditionist Mā'zarī has

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. I, p. 546, Chapter on Freeing the Slave Girls and Marrying Them.

been quoted, in the commentary on Abū Dāwūd, as saying that the Prophet had Ṣafiyya married to him "as she was a highly connected lady, being the daughter of a Jew Chief and her union with any one else would have been insulting to her." Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in *Fath al-Bārī*, has also expressed a similar view.

Evidently, after the destruction of her own family, Ṣafiyya should have lived, a slave or a wife, in a strange home. She was the daughter of the Chief of Khaibar and her husband was the chief of the Banū Nadīr. Father and husband had both been killed. In these circumstances the only way to safeguard her dignity, to respect her feelings, and to mitigate her sorrow was that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) should himself offer his hand. She could have even lived as a slave. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon) in view of her family status, first set her free and then married her. (More than that *Musnad* of Imām Hanbal has it that the Prophet gave her the choice to go back to her place as a free woman, or be married to him ; and she preferred the second alternative, that is getting married to the Prophet).[1] Not that, it was simply a noble act of mercy and kindness to the afflicted, it was, besides that, a course most commendable from political and religious considerations. Islam found favour with the Arabs when they noticed what sympathy and beneficence it could extend to the survivors of its enemies. A similar case that of Juwairiya at the battle of Banū Mustaliq, had yielded very beneficial results, as already narrated.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stayed at Khaibar for a few days more. The Jews had been assured of complete peace and security and given various privileges ; yet they persisted in their rebellious ways. The first instance was the occasion when Zainab, wife of Salām

1. *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal, Vol. III, p. 138, Egypt—Sulaimān.

Ibn Mishkam and sister-in-law of Marhab, invited the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with some of his Companions to a feast. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was kind enough to accept her invitation. Zainab had put poison in the food she served. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) took a morsel and then held back his hand. Bishr Ibn Barā' ate to his fill and at last died of it. Interrogated by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), Zainab confessed her guilt. The Jews said they put the poison because if he was a prophet the poison would have no effect, and if he was not, they would get rid of him.

It was not the Prophet's way to take personal revenge ; and so he did not call Zainab to account. But two or three days later, Bishr died of the poison, and then Zainab was executed to pay for his death.

Once two Companions, 'Abdullāh Ibn Suhail and Muḥayyiṣa visited Khaibar during a famine. The Jews killed 'Abdullāh by treachery and threw his body into a canal. Muḥayyiṣa came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked him if he could say on oath that the Jews had killed 'Abdullāh. Muḥayyiṣa replied that even if the Jews had killed fifty Muslims, they would declare on oath that they had killed none. In short the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did nothing to bring the Jews to book, and ordered the blood money to be paid from the *Bait al-Māl* (Public Treasury).

By the way we may cite here another instance from the days of Caliph 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him), when the Jews threw 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar down from the roof while he was asleep, with the result that he got a leg and hand fractured. Always mischievous and intransigent, they had to be sent into exile by 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) to

Syria.[1]

While describing the battle of Khaibar, the history-writers have committed a serious blunder in reporting a totally baseless report, which has become a common place. It is said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had granted amnesty to the Jews on condition that they would not hide anything. When Kināna Ibr Rabī' refused to give any clue to the hidden treasures, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered Zubair to adopt stern measures to force a disclosure. Zubair branded his chest with a hot flint again and again, till he was on the point of death.[2] At last he ordered Kināna to be put to death and all the Jews were made slaves.[3]

The whole truth in the story is that Kināna was put to death. But it was not for his refusal to give a clue to the hidden treasure. He was put to death because he had killed Maḥmūd Ibn Maslama (also Muslima). Tabarī has reported it in unambiguous words : "Then the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave Kināna to Muḥammad Ibn Maslama (Muslima), "and he put him to death in retaliation of the murder of his own brother, Maḥmūd Ibn Maslama (Muslima)."

In the rest of the report, both Tabarī and Ibn Hishām have quoted it from Ibn Isḥāq, but Ibn Isḥāq does not name any narrator. Traditionists, in books on Rijal, have explicitly stated that Ibn Ishāq used to borrow from the Jews stories concerning the battle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). As Ibn Isḥāq does not mention the name of any narrator whatsoever in this case, there is every likelihood of the story having been passed on by the Jews.

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1. *Futūh al-Buldān*, Balādharī, p. 28 and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. I, p. 377, Mustāfā'ī Press.

2. All this detail is given in Tabarī and Ibn Hishām.

3. *Futūh al-Buldān*, Balādharī, p. 124.

That a man should be tortured with burns on his chest by the sparks of a flint is too heinous a deed for a Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) who had earned for himself the title of *Rahmatlil 'Alamīn* (Mercy for all the worlds). After all, did he not let the woman who had sought to poison him go scot free. Who would expect such a soul to order human body to be so burnt for the sake of a few coins.

As a matter of fact, Kināna Ibn Rabī' Ibn al-Ḥuquaiq had been granted his life on the condition that he would never break faith or make false statements. He had also given his word, according to one of the reports, that if he did anything to the contrary, he could be put to death.[1] Kināna played false,[2] and the immunity granted to him was withdrawn. He killed Maḥmūd Ibn Maslama (or Muslima) and had, therefore, to suffer for it, as we have already stated on the authority of Tabarī.

Let us take note of the incidents grafted on the original story :

1. The execution story related exclusively to Kināna. He alone was guilty of concealing the hidden treasure. It was he who had killed Maḥmūd and he alone could have been put to death. The first stratum laid over the story is to be found in the report narrated by Ibn Sa'd, on the authority of Bakr Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, which, names Kināna's brother as a co-victim, meaning that both were executed. It runs thus : "Then the Prophet order both of them to be put to death and enslaved their surviving women and children."[3]

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1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Ghazwa Khaibar, p. 81, line 24.

2. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Chapter, "The Land of Khaibar."

3. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Ghazwa Khaibar, p. 81, line 27.

2. But it does not end here. Ibn Sa'd has another report to the authority of 'Affān Ibn Muslim, which goes further. It says that, with the two culprits, the rest of the Jews were all taken prisoners and made slaves. It runs thus :

"And when the hidden treasure was found concealed inside the hide of a camel, then their women were all captured and reduced to slavery."[1]

When these reports are judged in the light of the criteria set by the traditionists, the shells fell off, and we get at the bare core of truth. Far from massacring or enslaving all the Jews in a mass, even Kināna's brother had not to suffer, who, as given in *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, was living in the days of the second Caliph, 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him). Bukhārī says : "When 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) had made up his mind, a son of Abi al-Huquaiq came to him and asked him why he was going to be turned out, whereas the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had allowed them to live on payment of Jizya."[2] Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in *Fath al-Bārī*, has pointed out that he was no other than the brother of Kināna Ibn Rabī' Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq.

Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim, in *Zād al-Ma'ād*, reduces the number of the executed to two. He says : "After the peace, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sentenced to death none except the two sons of Abi al-Huquaiq. Had the Hāfiz taken note of the report in *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, the number should have been further reduced.

Abū Dāwūd, Chapter on Khaibar, states that Ibn Abī al-Huquaiq alone had been killed. This statement should be read with another report in *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd which says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him)

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 80.

2. *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Vol. I, Mustafā'ī Press, p. 377.

asked Sa'iya (uncle of Ḥuyayy Ibn Akhṭab) where the treasure was hidden and he replied that it had all been spent up on war. Thus we can resist the conclusion that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered Kināna alone to be killed, and that he was killed because he had to suffer for murder, and not because he would not let out a secret, which if it was a criminal act punishable by death, had several others involved in the same offence.

The first mistake made by the historians was that to the concealing of the treasure they ascribed the death of Kināna, which naturally led to the generalisation that the whole family had to die, for they were all equally guilty.

Another Debatable Point

It is admitted on all hands that the battle of Khaibar took place in the month of Muharram, that is, the month was drawing to a close when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) left Medīna. Islam prohibits fighting in the month of Muharram. Most of the legalists hold that fighting had been prohibited in certain months in the early days of Islam ; but later on the prohibition was abrogated. Ibn Qayyim says that the first prohibition was contained in the verse :

> "Say thou fighting therein (during the month) is grievous, and hindering people from the way of Allāh. (2 : 217)

Again in the *Sūra al-Ma'ida* there is a verse :

> "O ye who believe ! profane not the landmarks of Allāh nor any sacred month." (5 : 2)

The latter verse is chronologically placed eight years after the first, which means that during all this intervening period the prohibition remained in force. Where did then the abrogation come from, what verse or tradition has it ? We do not come across anything in the Holy Book or the tradition that abrogates the Verses given above.

Legalists have argued that the Conquest of Mecca, the siege of Tā'if and the Bai'at Riḍwān, had all taken place in the prohibited month. Had fighting been always prohibited in this month, why should the Prophet have permitted all that? Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim refutes the argument with the plea that it is unlawful to launch an offensive in the prohibited months, but fighting in defence is unanimously held to be allowed. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on all those occasions had fought in defence, he did not make a beginning. The Bai'at Riḍwān (Oath taken at Hudaibiya) was taken owing to the rumoured assassination of 'Uthmān (Allāh be pleased with him, who had gone to negotiate terms. The siege of Tā'if was not a battle in its own right, but a lingering shadow of battle of Hunain, where the infidels themselves had mobilised for an aggressive assault. The Conquest of Mecca was likewise a corollary to the violation of peace concluded at Hudaibiya, for which the Quraish were responsible.[1]

Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim is right, but in the case of Khaibar he did not justify the action, as he should have done. 'Allama Ibn Taimiyya, his teacher had similar doubts. In his book, *al-Jawab al-Sahīh le Man Baddala Din al-Masīh*, he has observed that all the battles of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) were fought in defence with the exception of Badr and Khaibar. Had the 'Allama taken a more comprehensive view, he should have named no exception. The Battle of Badr has already been discussed, while the sequence of events antecedent of Khaibar reveals the fact that the Ghatafān and the Jews had already made plans for an attack on Medīna.

Distribution of Land

The land pertaining to Khaibar was divided into two equal parts. Half of it was earmarked for *Bait al-Māl*,

1. *Zād al-Ma'ād*, Ghazwa Khaibar.

entertainment of guests and expenditure on embassies. The other half was equally divided among those who had participated in the battle. The total strength was 1400, two hundred being horsemen, with an allowance for the keep of their horses, were given a double share and so the land was divided into 1800 lots[1] and every fighter got one.[2] The Holy Prophet, just like all others, had one share for himself, "And for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was one such share."[3]

Political Conditions and Legal Regulations

The victory at Khaibar starts a new era in the political life of Islam. Islam had in fact to face two hostile forces—the infidels and the Jews. There were the Christians too, but they had little power or influence. Though opposed to each other in religious beliefs, political considerations had led the infidels and the Jews to get united. The Jews at Medina had been usually in alliance with the *Anṣāris*, and similarly those of Khaibar with the tribe of Ghatafān. The dissemblers as well as the declared unbelievers, whether at Mecca or Medīna, stood united as one force against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). But the victory at Khaibar totally shattered the Jews, and thus the opposition lost one of its wings.

Islam had upto that time been beset with enemies on all

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1. *Futūh al-Buldān*, Balādharī, Description of Khaibar.

2. Here the 'Allama has committed a mathematical error. While describing the division of booty after the battle of Hunain the 'Allama himself has described that the horseman was given a treble share and not double. Thus the whole booty must have been divided into 2,000 lots. Out of these 2,000 shares 600 were to be given to the 200 horsemen and the rest to the 1400 men on foot, the total number of soldiers being 1600—Translator.

3. *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd, The Land of Khaibar. The words are "And for the Prophet was a share like the share of any one of them."

sides. That was not the time suited to instituting and enforcing a new order of living. Of course, the necessary rules for observing prayers could not be held in abeyance. As 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) once remarked the Law was gradually revealed as necessity arose. We shall turn to the topic later on. The victory at Khaibar did away with the mischief-mongering of the Jews, while the Treaty of Hudaibiya had given the Muslims a sort of respite in their relations with the infidels. There was now an atmosphere in which the community could be able to order its life according to the Law of Allāh.

Biographers while describing the battle of Khaibar have often mentioned the various injunctions of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) revealed to and enforced by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), at this time.[1] They may be enumerated as follows :

1. Birds of prey having claws were declared forbidden.
2. Carnivorous animals were similarly forbidden.
3. Donkeys, hinny or mule were forbidden.
4. Hitherto one could share bed with a slave-girl immediately one came by her. Restrictions were now imposed and cohibition was prohibited during pregnancy or else for a month.
5. Purchase of gold and silver for profiteering, or if it was made to show off one's riches and high position, was prohibited.
6. As reports say "*Muta*'" (Temporary marriage contract for a specified period) was also made illegal at this time.

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1. Here revelation does not mean the revelation of the Qur'ān. The word is used in a general sense.

Wādī al-Qura and Fadak

Lying between Tamīm and Khaibar was a valley with many habitations. This was known as Wādī al-Qura, the ancient home of 'Ād and Thamūd. Yāqūt, in *Mu'ajamul Buldān* wrote that the ruins of 'Ād and Thamūd could be seen even then. Before the advent of Islam the Jews had settled there and developed irrigation and agriculture. This area had soon grown to be a centre of the Jews[1] in Arabia.

Having reduced Khaibar, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) started for Wādī al-Qura. He did not mean to fight, but the Jews were prepared before hand, and began a shower of arrows. Mud'im, a slave in the service of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who was taking off the saddle from the camel's back was struck and died. Historians generally do not speak of the preparations made by the Jews. But Imām Baihaqī has definitely said, "The Jews came out to meet us with arrowshots, for which we were not ready."[2] Anyhow, a battle ensued. After a brief fight the Jews surrendered and peace was made on the terms of Khaibar.

Performance of 'Umra

At Hudaibiya it had been agreed that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) could pay a visit next year for an 'Umra,[3] but was not to stay for more than

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1. *Mu'ajamul Buldān*, Word Qura, Vol. VII, p. 73.

2. Zurqānī, on Mo'atta, borrowing from Baihaqī, Chapter al-Jihād and discourse on Ghulūl, p. 313—Sulaimān.

3. As elsewhere explained 'Umra is a kind of pilgrimage. One doing 'Umra has to cover one's body with the Hajj robe or *Ihrām*, does *Tawaf* or circumambulation, walks with quick paces in between the Safā and Marwa. Only the above mentioned acts are performed by one doing 'Umra,

three days. Accordingly, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of making the pilgrimage this year. He had it announced that all those who had accompanied him the previous year, should deem it a duty to join the pilgrims without fail, and so they did all, excepting of course, those who had died in the meantime.

The peace treaty had stipulated that Muslims should not bear any arms when on their visit to Mecca. Arms were, therefore, left at Bāhij, eight miles from Mecca, under the custody of two hundred horsemen.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), when in Mecca, marched towards *Haram* with the words *Labbaika* upon his lips. 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa was holding the string of the Prophet's camel and reciting :

> "Get out of the way, O' infidels. Our swords shall flash over if you choose to stop us this day, and our strokes shall get heads parted from their resting places and friends forgotten by friends."

A vast multitude of the Companions followed the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), all performing, with great fervour, the pious duty for which they had long been craving. The Meccans had thought the climate of Medina had told upon the physical strength of the Muslims. So the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered the followers to draw themselves up while making the first three rounds. This manner of walking is known as *Ramal* and even today this *Sunnah* (practice) continues.

The Meccans were obliged to let the Muslims perform the 'Umra. Yet they could not bear to witness the spectacle. Most of the dignitaries of the Quraish had, therefore, left the city for the hills. Three days over, they came to 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) saying that the stipulated time having elapsed, he should ask the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to leave Mecca. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him)

told the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and he left the city immediately. At the time of departure, the youngest daughter of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) Umāma by name, who had been left at Mecca, came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), crying "Uncle, Uncle."[1] 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him), lifted her up in his arms. Ja'far and Zaid Ibn Haritha both claimed her—the one because she was a daughter of his uncle, and the other on the ground that she was his niece, being the daughter of Hamza, his brother in Islam. 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him), claimed her as a cousin and secondly because he was the first man to whose arms she had run up. Seeing that they had all equal claims, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), gave her to Asmā', the maternal aunt of Umāma, saying that a maternal aunt was as good as a mother.[2]

1. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), was a cousin of hers. But she called him her uncle as a mark of respect, or perhaps because the Prophet and Hamza were both foster brothers.

2. Most of these details have been taken from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and the rest from Zurqānī, who has given the names of the collections of traditions from which he borrowed.

THE BATTLE OF MUTA

(Jamadi al-Awwal, 8th Hijra,
September, 639 C. E.)

Mūta is a place in Syria situated on this side of Balqā'. The swords, so well-known in Arabia, were made here.[1] Kuthair, the famous poet says : "The swords that receive a glittering finish at Mūta."[2]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), had addressed a letter to the king of Buṣra or the Byzantine Emperor. Among the Arab chieftains who held sway over the border tracts of Syria and Rabi'a, there was one Shuraḥbil Ibn 'Amr, ruling over the Balqā' region as a vassal of the Hiracleus. This Arab family had long since been converted to Christianity and held a territory on the fringes of Syria. Hārith Ibn 'Umair who had gone with the letter was put to death by Shuraḥbil. To avenge his murder, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), collected an army of three thousand and despatched it to Syria. Zaid Ibn Haritha, the freed slave of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was given the command with instructions that Ja'far Ṭayyār, was to succeed him if he died, and in case Ja'far also fell, 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa was to take his place.[3]

Zaid was after all a slave, though given his freedom. Ja'far was the real brother of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him)

1. *Mu'ajam al-Buldān*, Mūta, Vol. VIII, p. 190.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Mūta.

3. *Fatḥ al-Bāri*, p. 393, Mūta.

and a close associate of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). 'Abdullah Ibn Rawāḥa was a poet and a man of position among the *Anṣārīs*. Naturally people wondered why, in the presence of Ja'far and 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa, Zaid had been placed in command of the force. Comments were murmured. But equality which Islam had come to establish demanded a spirit of sacrifice. Later on when the *Muhājirs* were all ordered to join the expedition sent under Usāma, the son of this very Zaid Ibn Haritha, they were again heard to be critical. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), came to know and in a sermon said that they had similarly objected to Usāma's father being placed in command, though verily he deserved it. (See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter, Despatch of Usāma in the book on Maghāzī).

The object of the expedition was to claim requital for blood, but all military activity used to be centred round the fundamental mission, the propagation of the message of Islam. Hence the instructions to invite the enemy to Islam first. If they came over, fighting was out of question. As a mark of love for the departed soul, the Muslims were also directed to go to the place where Hārith Ibn 'Umair had died in performance of his duty. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), himself accompanied the army upto *Thaniyyāt al-Widā*, where the Companions loudly prayed for the successful return of the expedition.

As the army set out from Medīna, spies carried the news to Shuraḥbil, who mobilized an army of about a lakh of men. Hiracleus himself with a large army of Arab tribes was encamped at Ma'āb, in the territory of Balqā'. Realising the situation, Zaid thought of informing the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and waiting for his orders. But 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa said that conquest was not their aim, their primary aim was to attain martyrdom[1] and this

1. Ibn Hishām, Ghazwa Mūta.

they could do any time. In short this tiny force moved forward and charged an army a hundred thousand strong. Zaid was wounded by enemy spears and died. Ja'far now held the flag, came down from his horse, cut down the hemstrings of his animal and then fought, reckless of death, till, fatally wounded with swords and lances, he fell and died. 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar says that he had seen the dead body of Ja'far, and counted ninety wounds all frontal,[1] and none on the back. 'Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥa now bore the flag and met a heroic death. Now Khālid assumed the command and put up a fierce fight. Bukhārī says he broke eight swords in his hand. But three thousand pitted against a hundred thousand made no match. To manage a safe retreat was not short of a victory. But when the routed force reached Medina, people came out to receive it, greeting it not with words of sympathy, but handfuls of dust thrown at their faces, and saying "O ye, run-aways, you have fled from the path of God."[2]

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1. *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Battle of Mūta.

2. The author, following Ibn Ishāq, calls them a routed force—deserving to be called run-aways without exception. But Bukhārī, in the Chapter on Mūta, reports from the Prophet the inspired words that then a Sword of Allāh appeared on the scene (*i.e.*, Khālid, the Sword of Allāh (*Saifullāh*), took hold of the flag) and God gave the Muslims the upper hand over their enemies. Biographers, traditionists and commentators of traditions hold different opinions regarding the meaning of the "Upper hand." One group holds that the Muslims were victorious in the full sense of the word. Others say that the parties in spite of the vast inequality of numbers, left the field tired of fighting, before the event of the day could declare itself, and this was no less than a triumph for the Muslims so small in number. A third view is that the report refers to an actual victory of the Muslims against a particular column from which they could even exact booty. Lastly it is held that victory consisted in stemming back the surging hosts and marching back unhurt under Khālid. (See *Fath al-Bāri*, *Raud al-Anaf*, Suhailī, *al-Bidaya*, Ibn Kathīr).

(*Contd. on* p. 186

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), was much grieved. He had a great love for Ja'far whom he sorely missed. He was sitting alone in the Holy Mosque, sad at heart, when a man entered with the news that the women-folk of Ja'far's family had set up lamentations. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), sent them word to stop. The man returned saying he could not persuade them. He was sent again and again came with reply that his words had no effect. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Then fill their mouths with dust." This has been mentioned in *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī* on the authority of 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her). It futher adds that 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) said to the man, "By God, you will not do this (filling their mouths with dust) and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) won't be rid of this agony."

Contd. from p. 185)

Thus it was only a single detachment of the Muslim army which felt it had fled from the field or was supposed to have done so by other Muslims. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), set their minds at ease by telling them that they were not in fact run-aways, but had retreated back only to renew the attack. These words did not refer to the whole force, but the particular detachment which had hastened back to Medīna .. For details see *Fath al-Bāri*, *Raud al-Anaf*, Suhailī, *al-Bidaya*, Ibn Kathīr, Chapter on the battle of Mūta—Sulaimān.

CONQUEST OF MECCA

"We have given to thee a clear victory."
(*Sūra al-Fatha*)

The foremost duty of the heir to the mission of Prophet Ibrāhim (peace be upon him), was the revival of pure monotheism and the purgation of the Ka'ba of all that was unholy. The incessant aggression by the Quraish, and the hostile attitude of the Arabs in general, did not allow the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to acquit himself of this sacred duty for full twenty-one years. The Treaty of Hudaibīya did, no doubt, bring a temporary peace, which enabled the devotees of the Ka'ba to pay a brief visit to their ancestral monument. But the Quraish did not even abide by the Treaty of Hudaibiya. There is after all, a limit to forbearing and forgiving. It was now time for the Light of Truth to shine forth and dispel the shadows.

Availing themselves of the option given by the Treaty of Hudaibiya, the Khuzā'a, and Arab tribe, had made an alliance with the Muslims, while their rivals, the Banū Bakr, had patched up a treaty with the Quraish. They had been at war for a very long time, but the advent of Islam having engaged the attention of all Arabia, the age-long feud had come to a stand-still, as the resources of the entire nation were being utilized to resist the new faith. The Treaty of Hudaibiya having promised a respite, the Banū Bakr felt it was time to settle old scores. All of a sudden they fell upon the Khuzā'a with the open aid of the chiefs of the Quraish. 'Ikrima Ibn Abū Jahl, Safwān Ibn Umayya, Suhail Ibn 'Amr

and others fought against the Khuzā'a disguised[1] and under the cover of the night ; and played havoc with their swords. The Khuzā'a sought refuge in the Holy Ka'ba and the Banū Bakr held back, respecting the sanctity of the House of Allāh. But Naufal, the chief of the tribe, reminded them that they were losing a golden chance for ever. Consequently, the sacred soil was drenched with the blood of the Khuzā'a.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was seated in the Holy Mosque, when all of a sudden he heard a voice calling :

> "O' Allāh, I will remind Muḥammad of the treaty concluded between us and his venerable family. O' Messenger of Allāh, come to our rescue, call upon the men of God and they shall all come to render help."

It was found that a party of forty[2] men of the Khuzā'a, riding on camels under the leadership of 'Amr Ibn Sālim, had arrived to remonstrate with the Prophet. The Prophet heard the whole story and was very much sorry for what had happened. Nevertheless, he sent a messenger to the Quraish, who were asked to accept one of the three alternatives :

1. Blood money of the murdered men should be paid.
2. The Quraish should give up their alliance with the Banū Bakr.
3. The Treaty of Hudaibiya should be declared null and void.

Qarta Ibn 'Umar, on behalf of the Quraish, made answer to the messenger that only the last condition could be accept-

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1. Tabari, Vol. III, p. 1620 and Ibn Sa'd Maghazi, p. 97.
2. *Tabaqāt*, p. 97.

able.[1] But after the departure of the messenger, the Quraish repented and despatched Abū Sufyān as their representative to get the Treaty of Hudaibiya renewed. Abū Sufyān came to Medina and made an appeal to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to which the Prophet made no reply. Abū Sufyān then asked Abū Bakr and 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with them) to intercede, but none would even hear of it. Disappointed by all others, he came to Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her). Imām Hasan was then five years old. "If this child," said Abū Sufyān pointing to Hasan, "should just utter the words that he had brought about a reconciliation between the two parties, he would be acclaimed as the over-lord of Arabia." Fātima (Allāh be pleased with her) replied, "Children have nothing to do with such matters." At last Abū Sufyān, at the instance of 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) came to the Holy Mosque, and announced that he had renewed the Treaty of Hudaibiya.[2]

On reaching Mecca, when Abū Sufyān told the people what he had done, they all disapproved of it, saying, "This means neither peace so that we might not be worried any longer, nor war so that we should get prepared for it."

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set about making preparations for a march against Mecca. Messages were sent to the allies to come well-equipped, and precautions were taken not to let the Meccans know of it.

Hātib Ibn Balta'a, one of the eminent Companions, despatched a secret note to the Quraish, telling them of the Prophet's plans against Mecca. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to know of the secret despatch and sent 'Alī, Zubair, Miqdād and Marthad

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1. Zurqani has quoted this on the authority of Maghazi by Ibn 'Ā'id. It is strange that historians have overlooked such an important fact.

2. Zurqani, *'Alā al-Mawahib*, Vol. II, p. 337.

Ghanavī[1] to intercept the messenger and seize the letter, which, when produced before the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), came as a surprise to one and all. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) felt so indignant that he asked for permission to strike his head off. But not a frown was discernible on the merciful face of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who said, "Umar, you do not know if God may have promised absolution from sins to all who fought at Badr."

Hātib's relations were still at Mecca, and they had none to protect them. So he had thought of placing the Quraish under obligation that they might do them no harm. He explained the situation to the Prophet and the Prophet was satisfied.

In short on the 10th of Ramaḍān, in the eighth year of the Hijra, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) marched out of Medīna with ten thousand well armed followers in full military splendour. Tribes joined the expedition on the way. At Marr al-Zahrān they encamped, the camp covering an extensive area. The place lay at a distance of one march from Mecca or even less than that.

As advised by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), each member of the force lit up his own fire, which turned the desert into a field of light. The Quraish got wind of the Muslim advance. Hakīm Ibn Hizām, (nephew of Khadīja), Abū Sufyān and Budail Ibn Warqa were sent out to ascertain facts. The party guarding the tent of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) caught sight of Abū Sufyān.[2] 'Umar, (Allāh be pleased with him) in a spirit

1. Zurqani, *'Ala al-Mawahib*, Vol. II. p. 339.

2. All these facts have been given in Bukhārī. More details have been taken from Ibn Hajar's commentary on Bukhārī. On the authority of Musa Ibn 'Uqba, Ibn 'Ā'id and others. Some incidents have been borrowed from Tabari.

of revenge beyond control, hastened to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and said, "It is the time to strike at the root of unbelief." But 'Abbās pleaded to spare him. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) repeated his request. "'Umar", said 'Abbās, "had this man belonged to your tribe, you would not have been so hard-hearted to him." "Say not so", replied 'Umar, "Had my father, Khaṭṭāb, turned a Muslim, I would not have felt as happy as I did on the day you came under Islam."[1]

Abū Sufyān's record of past misdeeds was known to one and all ; each of these was serious enough to call for a penalty of death. He had been ever hostile, had repeatedly marched against Medīna, had instigated the Arabs against the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ; his blood could in all justice be claimed as a price for any of these offences. But far above these dictates of justice, there was something—the Mercy of the Prophet—that whispered to him to cast off fears.

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī says he embraced Islam no sooner than he was arrested. But Tabarī, while describing the details, records the following dialogue :

Prophet : Why, O' Abū Sufyān, don't you still believe that there is no god but Allāh.

Abū Sufyān : Had there been any, he should have helped us now.

Prophet : Do you doubt that I am His Messenger ?

Abū Sufyān : Of this I am not quite convinced.

Anyhow, Abū Sufyān evinced a liking for Islam. His faith was shaky at that time, but he is reported to have become a true Muslim in the end. In the battle of Tā'if he

1. Tabari, Vol. III, p. 632.

got an eye injured and in the battle of Yarmūk, he lost it altogether.

As the army moved towards Mecca, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked 'Abbās to take Abū Sufyān on to the top of hill that he might see for himself the army of Allāh in its majestic array. Shortly after, the forces came in motion. Tribal contingents surged onward like angry tides. The Ghifār flag was the first to be seen, then followed the tribes of Juhaina, Hudhaim, Sulaim and Sa'd all armed to the teeth and raising cries of *Allāhu Akbar* (God is Great). Abū Sufyān looked at each contingent, struck with awe. Last came the *Anṣār*, so splendidly equipped that he felt his eyes dimmed. "What soldiery is this ?", he asked utterly surprised. 'Abbās then told him who they were. In the mean time Sa'd Ibn 'Ubāda, the Commander of the force rode past, with the flag in his hand. Catching sight of Abū Sufyān, Sa'd cried aloud : "It is going to be a day of hand to hand strife. This day shall the Ka'ba be ours by right."[1]

Last of all came the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), like an illuminary that cast its lustre far around. Zubair Ibn al-'Awwām was the flag-bearer. Abū Sufyān, as he glanced at the Prophet's face full of heavenly radiance, burst out : "Did you hear what 'Ubada has said ?" "'Ubāda was wrong", said the Prophet, "It is the day when the Ka'ba shall be restored to its dignity." Saying so, the Prophet ordered the flag to be taken from Sa'd and given to his son.

Having arrived at Mecca, he ordered the flag to be pitched at Hajūn. Khālid was instructed to move with his force towards the uplying side.[2]

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.*

2. Here the author has followed the report by 'Urwa, which though

(*Contd. on* p. 193

Amnesty was announced to whosoever laid down his arms, sought shelter in the house of Abū Sufyān, closed his own door or entered the Ka'ba. With all that, a group of the Quraish chose to offer resistance and showered arrows at the detachment under the command of Khālid. Three Muslims, Kurz Ibn Jābir Fihrī, Khunais Ibn Ash'ar,[1] and Salama Ibn al-Mailā', lost their lives. Thus forced, Khālid ordered an attack and the opponents took to their heels, leaving thirteen dead on the field. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) noticed the flashing of swords and asked Khālid for an answer. But he was informed that the unbelievers had opened the attack and he let the matter off with the remark that such was the Will of Allāh.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was asked if he would like to stay in his ancestral home. Under the Islamic Law a Muslim cannot inherit property from a non-Muslim. When Abū Tālib, the uncle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had died, his son, 'Aqīl, who was a non-believer then, had inherited his father's property, and he had sold all those houses to Abū Sufyān. So the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "'Aqīl has left no house for me to stay in, so I will put up at Khief, where the Quraish made a league to uphold heathenism in opposition to us."[2]

Contd. from p. 192)

given in *Bukhārī* is *Mursal.* Reports based on better authorities which are known as *Ṣaḥīḥ* or *Marfū'* and which also appear in *Bukhārī*, say that Khālid made his entry from the lower side while the Prophet came from the higher side. See *Fath al-Bari*, Vol. VIII, p. 8.

1. Their martyrdom is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.*
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, in a report from Usāma Ibn Zaid quotes these words as having been uttered on this occasion, but makes no mention of Khief. But the report from Abū Huraira speaks of Khief and mentions these words as having been said on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage. Ibn Hajar reconciles the two statements by suggesting the possibility of a repetition of words on both the two occasions. (*Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. VIII, p. 13 and Vol. II, p. 360).

Strange are the ways of Allāh. The venerable Ka'ba, a monument to the memory of Prophet Ibrāhim (peace be upon him) the idol-breaker, had no less than three hundred and sixty idols lodged in it. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) went round with a stick knocking off each idol as he passed, and reciting the verse : "Truth has come, Falsehood is gone, Verily falsehood is ever-vanishing."[1]

Within the central sanctuary itself, that is the Ka'ba proper, there were idols believed to be gods by the Quraish. Before he would enter the Ka'ba, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), ordered the removal of all these idols.[2] 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) stepped in and erased the various portraits as well. The Ka'ba having been purged of all this pollution, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) demanded the keys of the Ka'ba[3] from 'Uthmān Ibn Talha, the Keeper, and had the door opened. Accompanied by Bilāl and Talha, he entered the House of Worship and offered prayers there. There is another report in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* to the effect that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did

1. Ibn Sa'd, while dealing with the Conquest of Mecca, quotes the entire verse as having been recited on the occasion, but *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* cuts it short to "Truth has come and Falsehood vanished and no more shall falsehood return."

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Fall of Mecca.

3. Here some ambiguity has been created. The 'Allama has already said that the Prophet and others entered the Ka'ba and that 'Umar entered the Ka'ba and erased the various portraits there inside the Ka'ba. After saying this he says that the keys were demanded from 'Uthmān Ibn Talha. The fact is that the Prophet and others entered the *Ḥaram* and got the idols and portraits etc., removed or erased from there. Then he demanded the keys from 'Uthmān Ibn Talha and entered the place known as "Muqām Ibrāhīm" (the place of Abraham) which serves the purpose of Ka'ba inside the *Ḥaram*—Translator.

not offer prayers, and only called out *Allāhu Akbar* (God is Great).

The Sermon of Victory

To borrow a mundane phraseology, now was held the first public audience in the Imperial Court of Islam. The Royal Proclamation, nay, the Speech from the Throne of the One God, was read out by His Vice-regent and Messenger, not only to the Meccans there assembled, but to mankind at large. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "There is no god but Allāh. He has no partners. He has fulfilled His Promise, helped His servant and shattered all confederacies. Yes, all the proud privileges, all the old claims for blood and revenge are here this day under my feet ; the only exceptions are the custodianship of the Holy Ka'ba and the Office pertaining to the supply of water to the pilgrims. O' man of the Quraish, this day does God sweep away all the pride of the pagan days and all notions of superiority by birth. The whole race is descended from Adam and Adam was made of clay." He followed the sermon with the following verse of Holy Qur'ān : "O' humankind ! verily We ! We have created you of a male and a female, and We have made you nations and tribes that you might know one another. Verily the noblest of you with Allāh is the most God-fearing of you ; verily Allāh is Knowing, Aware." (49 : 13)

Main Implications of the Sermon

Arab custom made it incumbent upon a family to claim blood for blood if its members happened to be murdered. In case they could not get at the murderer at that time, the name of the murdered would go down in the family records till they had their revenge and done their duty, no matter how long after. If the murderer was not living, any other member of his family or tribe was put to death. Similarly,

the demand for blood-money passed unbarred by time from sire to son. Sweet revenge was to the Arab a matter of great pride. Many and absurd traditions, like these flattered their sense of national vanity. Islam had come to abolish them all, and so did the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) declare that all that system of bartering murder for blood or money, and all the rest of the false notions they prided on, were that day trampled down under his feet.

In Arabia, and in the whole world for that matter, society had been split up into the high and the low based on distinctions of blood and birth. It was just as the Hindus had four castes, of which the Shudras were assigned the lowest grade and fared no better than beasts of burden. And they did not stop at that, but imposed restrictions to keep them for ever held fast in their servile position. The greatest good Islam did to the world was to proclaim the universal equality of man. It taught that Arabs and the non-Arabs, the noble and the lowly, the king and the beggar, were all equal and could attain to the highest ranks. To emphasise it, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) repeated a verse from the Qur'ān and elucidated it, saying, "All of you are the offspring of Adam and Adam was made of clay."

Having said that, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) cast a glance at the audience, and witnessed before him the mighty chiefs of the Quraish, including all sorts of hostile elements—those who had been the most active to crush Islam, those whose steel had insolently touched his person, those who had covered his passage with thorns, who had made his heels bleed while preaching, who could not be content with anything less than his life, who had more than once dashed against the walls of Medīna like furious waves, as also those who used to burn Muslim chests with hot irons after keeping the poor victims lying on burning sand.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) turned to them and spoke in a frightening tone, "Do you know what treatment I am going to mete out to you?" Devoid of pity and callous though, they knew what a kind soul the Prophet was. "You are", they said, "a noble brother and the son of a noble brother." "There is no charge against you," came the surprising reply,[1] "and all of you are free."

The Meccans had taken possession of the houses of the Muslim emigrants. Now was the time for such property to be restored to the lawful owners. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) persuaded the *Muhājirs* to forego their claims.

At Prayer time, Bilāl (Allāh be pleased with him) betook himself to the roof of the Ka'ba and recited the Call to the Prayer. The spirit of revolt just subdued was once more quickened by a sense of shame, and 'Attāb Ibn Usaid could not help saying, "Thanks God, my father's honour is saved in that he was not spared to hear this Call."[2] "Life is not worth living now", was the out-burst of feeling from another chief.

At Ṣafā the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) took his seat at an elevated place. Those who came to embrace Islam, were sworn to the faith with their hands in his. The women came up, when the men had gone through with it. The way they were converted was that they were first asked to promise observance of the Islamic rituals and adherence to the moral precepts taught by Islam, then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would dip his hand in a bowl of water and take it out. The convert would similarly dip hers, and the conversion was properly solemnised.

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1. Ibn Hishām.

2. Ibn Hishām—Later on 'Attāb turned a Muslim.

Hind was one of those who came to be converted – Hind, the daughter of 'Utba and mother of Amīr Mu'āwiya, the same Hind, who got Hamza murdered, then opened his chest and bit off his liver. She wore a veil as did the women of the upper classes, but the more so, to avoid being recognised. At the time of conversion her talk with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was fearless, though insolent. The dialogue as reported is given below :

The Prophet : Make no partner with Allāh.

Hind : You did not ask men to give such a pledge. However I promise that.

The Prophet : You should not commit thefts.

Hind : I do sometimes help myself to a few coins out of the cash of my husband, Abū Sufyān. I do not know if that is wrong.

The Prophet : Do not induldge infanticide.

Hind : We brought up our children till they came of age, and you killed them at Badr. Now it is for you to settle your accounts with them.[1]

Among the dignitaries of the Quraish there were ten who enjoyed positions of highest eminence. One of them was Safwān Ibn Umayya and he fled to Jeddah. 'Umair Ibn Wahb (also read as Wahab) came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with the news that the greatest of the Meccans was going to exile himself. As a token of amnesty, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) handed over his turban. 'Umair reached Jeddah and fetched him back. Upto the battle of Hunain he did not embrace Islam, but later on he did.[2]

'Abdullāh Ibn Zib'ara, the famous poet who used to

1. In the battle of Badr sons of Hind had been killed.

2. Tabarī, Vol. II, p. 1645 and *Isābah*, Vol. III, p. 187

compose slanderous verses against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and pick holes in the Qur'ān, fled to Najran. Later on he returned and embraced Islam.

'Ikrima, son of Abū Jahl flew to Yaman. His wife, Umm Hakim, pleaded for him to the Prophet, had him pardoned, and then went to Yaman and brought him back.[1] It would not be a good news for Abū Jahl if we could tell him how his own flesh and blood, abandoned his heathenism and went over to Islam to be ever-remembered with respect.

Proclaimed Culprits

Chroniclers name ten persons, who, notwithstanding the general amnesty granted to the Meccans, were declared to be punishable with death whenever found. Some of them like 'Abdullāh Ibn Khatal and Miqyas Ibn Subāba, stood charged with murder and were executed to pay for the blood they had shed. But others had only been guilty of torturing and tormenting the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), while at Mecca or composing slanderous verses against him. One was a woman who had sung satirical songs against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and was put to death.[2]

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1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1646.

2. Hāfiz Mughlatā'ī, enumerates fifteen names from various sources, and these in themselves are not very reliable in the opinion of the traditionists. Other writers in general have given ten names. Ibn Ishāq has given eight and Abū Dāwūd and Dār Qutnī only six. Bukhārī has described the execution of Ibn Khatal alone. This shows that the number fell with every advance in research and enquiry.

   The generally current report has it that the ten persons condemned to death were criminals of the blackest water. Seven of them embraced Islam and they were forgiven. Only three were executed—two men and one woman, namely 'Abdullāh Ibn Khatal, Miqyas

(*Contd. on* p. 200

But this statement when subjected to higher criticism as developed by the traditionists cannot stand scrutiny. Barring a few—not more than half a dozen—which of the Meccans had refrained from active participation in the persecution of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Yet they were all given their freedom. The victims alleged to have been put to death were answerable for crimes much less serious. Let us remember 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) saying that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) never sought a personal revenge, a report that appears in all Six Books of Authentic *Ahādith*. A woman had put poison in his food at Khaibar, but when asked whether she was to be slain, the Prophet's answer was a clear "No". If a Jewess, guilty of attempting murder by poison could go unharmed, how, on earth could the offenders of Mecca fail to share his mercy, in spite of the fact that they were not charged with anything as black as that.

But let alone this logical criticism, we shall have to admit that the story even if judged on the basis of reports, is unacceptable. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* mentions the execution of Ibn Khatal[1] alone, and this is admitted on all hands that he

Contd. from p. 199)

Ibn Subāba and Quraiba, the slave girl of Ibn Khatal. Ibn Khatal and Subāba were both guilty of murders. Ibn Khatal first a convert to Islam, had killed a slave of his and then turned an apostate. As to Miqyas Ibn Subāba a brother of his had been killed by an *Anṣārī*, but the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had paid his blood-money. Later on Miqyas affected a false conversion and then found some pretext to kill the *Anṣārī*; Huwairith had created trouble for the two daughters of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) while they were leaving Mecca for good. He had tried to push them down from the camel's back. He was killed by 'Ali. Quraiba, the slave girl of Ibn Khatal, was a Meccan songstress, who sang slanderous and defamatory verses against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). See Zurqani and Ibn Hishām, Chapter Conquest of Mecca.

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Fall of Mecca.

was executed for a murder. The execution of Miqyas too was a retaliatory sentence. All such reports, as ascribe the execution of others merely to their having harassed the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in the past, have Ibn Ishāq as the last narrator at the top; and in the terminology of the traditionists such reports are called *Mursal* and are not to be relied on.

The most reliable report that can be referred to in this connection is the one mentioned in Abū Dāwūd, which says that on the day when Mecca fell, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) declared that four persons could not be promised immunity.[1] But Abū Dāwūd adds that for this report he could not find authoritative sources of desired merit.[2] Then he quotes the report about Ibn Khatal.

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1. Abū Dāwūd, Chapter, Execution of the Captives.

2. In the Chapter on the "Execution of the Captives" Abū Dāwūd records three reports bearing on this topic. The first one recorded has been referred to by the author last of all. This one comes down through Ahmad Ibn al-Mufaddal, Isbāt Ibn Nadr, Suddī Kabīr, Musa Ibn Sa'd and Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqāṣ. It states four men and two women having been sentenced to death of whom one is Ibn Abi Sarh who was produced before the Prophet without his consent by 'Uthmān. 'Uthmān hesitated for a time and then promised protection to him and he then turned a Muslim. In connection with this report the integrity of three narrators, Isbāt Ibn Nadr, Ahmad Ibn Mufaddal and Suddī Kabīr has been questioned by the traditionists, the more particularly that of Isbāt Ibn Nadr. Nasā'ī in the Chapter on the "Execution of Apostates" and Hākim in *Mustadrak* in the Book on Maghazi record this report with the same chain of narrators. All the three narrators named above in this series are Shi'ah as pointed out by Hakim in his *Mustadrak*. The second report in Abū Dāwūd comes through 'Umar Ibn 'Uthmān Ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān Ibn Sa'id Makhzūmī. 'Umar having received it from his father. The report says that the Prophet refused protection to four men and two women who were both songstresses, one got converted and the other was put to death. Of this report Abū Dāwūd says that he could not com-

(*Contd. on* p. 202

The report quoted earlier has Ahmad Ibn Mufaddal as one of the narrators, whom Azdī calls a narrator of *Munkar* traditions. Another link in the series has Isbāt Ibn Nadr whom Nasā'ī does not believe to be quite weighty. Certainly flaws are not enough to make up a good case for rejecting a narration. Yet in view of the importance of the issue in hand even this much of deficiency is enough to create doubts.

It is certain that some of the Meccan notables who formed the vanguard of the opposition did flee away from Mecca when the approach of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to be known. That they left because of a death sentence is a mere product of Ibn Ishāq's imagination. Ibn Ishāq names 'Ikrima, the son of Abū Jahl, as well as one of the proclaimed culprits. In *Muwaṭṭā'* by Imām Mālik, which in accuracy and reliability has, according to Imām Shāfi'ī, no equal under the sun except the Qur'ān, this incident has been narrated as below : "Umm Hakīm, daughter of Hārith Ibn Hishām, was the wife of 'Ikrima, son

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Contd. from p. 201)

pletely grasp the sources of this report even with the help of his teacher Abū al-'Alā. Again, this report with the same chain appears in Dār Qutni towards the end of the Chapter on Pilgrimage. The chain ends with the words "'Umar had it from his father." It is evident that Abū Dāwūd looks upon this portion of the chain as doubtful. The third report in Abū Dāwūd speaks of a single execution, namely that of Ibn Khatal, which is corroborated by Bukharī. Baihaqi records a report coming down from Hakim Ibn 'Abd al-Mālik, Qatāda and Anas Ibn Mālik, which states three men and one woman as having been executed. The three men are Ibn Khatal, Miqyas Ibn Subāba and 'Abdullāh Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abī Sarh, the woman was one Umm Sarh by name. An *Anṣārī* had promised to kill 'Abdullāh Ibn Sa'd, but he was spared through the intercession of 'Uthmān, and Umm Sarh is no other than the woman who carried the secret letter telling the Muslim advance towards Mecca. In this report Hakim Ibn 'Abd al-Mālik is unanimously believed to be unreliable and 'Aqilī writes that none of his associates corroborates this report. For details see *Tahdhīb* of Ibn Hajar.

of Abū Jahl. She embraced Islam on the day Mecca fell. But her husband 'Ikrima Ibn Abū Jahl fled to Yaman, to keep away from Islam. Umm Hakīm went to Yaman, and invited him to Islam. He believed and came to Mecca. As the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) saw him, he rose to his feet in joy and walked up to him in a hurry, even without the upper garment (a sheet of cloth) on his body. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) then initiated him into Islam.

It must also be noted that those who were granted protection were not forced to embrace Islam. Historians and biographers have all stated that the Muslim force at the battle of Hunain, which took place a little after the Fall of Mecca, had in its ranks a good number of non-believers from Mecca who still stuck to their old beliefs. And it was their presence that brought on defeat, for they could not stand the first assault, and this disorder forced the Muslims to follow suit.

Valuables of the Ka'ba

Offerings of valuables had long been accumulating in the Holy Ka'ba. They were all preserved, but statues and pictures were all destroyed, which included the statues of Prophets Ibrāhīm and Ismā'il (peace be upon them) and a picture of Prophet Jesus Christ[1] (peace be upon him), which has led the people to suppose that Christianity had once been dominant. The pictures painted in colours on the walls could not be totally erased ; their faint impressions were visible till reconstruction in the days of 'Abdullāh Ibn Zubair.[2] The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of 'Allāh be upon him) stayed in Mecca for fifteen days and then he retired, leaving Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal to instruct the Meccans in Islamic ways.

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1. *Fath al-Bārī*, Chapter, Conquest of Mecca.

2. *Fath al-Bārī*. For details see Azraqī, News from Mecca.

Conquest of Mecca and Destruction of Idols

The main object of the conquest of Mecca was to preach Oneness of Allāh and glorify His Word. Among the many idols enshrined in the Ka'ba, there was one Hubal, the greatest of the Arab pantheon. It had a human form and was made of red rubies. The man who first installed it in the Ka'ba was Khuzaima Ibn Mudrika, a grand-son of Mudirr and a great grand-son of 'Adnān. Seven arrows with the words "Lā" and "Na'am" (meaning Yes and No) stamped on them were always lying before it. An Arab, before he undertook to do a thing, would draw lots with these arrows and act according to the "Yes" or "No" of the draw. In the battle of Uhud Abū Sufyān had invoked the help of this very Hubal.[1] The idol was placed inside the Ka'ba proper. With the Prophet's entry, it was done away with as the other idols.

Around Mecca there were many other famous idols which were worshipped with the same devotional rites as those of the Hajj. Of these Lāt, Manāt and 'Uzzā were held in highest esteem. 'Uzza was worshipped by the Quraish, and Lāt by the people of Tā'if. At a distance of one march from Mecca there is a place known as Nakhla', where 'Uzza was installed. The Banū Shaibān were its custodians. The Arabs believed that God spent the cold season with Lāt and the summer with 'Uzza. For 'Uzza they performed each item of the ritual gone through at the Ka'ba sacrifice, circumambulation and all.[2]

Manāt was enthroned at Mushallal (name of a mountain near the place known as Qudaid) near Qudaid seven miles on this side of Medīna. It was made of a single unhewn stone.

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1. *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, description of Hubal with referen to Hishām Ibn Muhammad Kalbī.

2. All this account has been taken from Zurqānī, Vol. II, p 400.

The tribesmen of Azd, Ghassān, Aus and Khazraj walked round it. Of the idols introduced by 'Amr Ibn Lohay, this one was the greatest. The tribes of Aus and Khazraj, on their way from Ka'ba, took off their pilgrim robes or got their hair cut at this very place.[1]

The Hudhail had a god of their own, known as Suwā'. This was set up at a place known as Rauhāt, near Yanbū'. This too was a mere piece of stone. The Banū Lehyān were its custodians.

Such were the idolatrous institutions that held a whole nation in servility. The hour had been struck for their destruction, and their temples did not take long to be turned into desolate ruins.

1. *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, Description of Manāt.

HAWAZIN AND THAQIF

Battles of Hunain, Autās and Tā'if.
(Shawwal, 8. A.H ... Feb., 630 C.E.)

Hunain

Hunain is a valley between Mecca and Tā'if. It lies at a distance of three miles from 'Arafa and Dhū al-Majādh, a market town in Arabia.[1] It lies at its foot. It is also called Autās.[2] Hawāzin is the name of a numerous tribe which has many offshoots.

The expansion of Islam did not alarm the Arabs so long as Mecca, their Sanctum Sanctorum, was safe. They also believed that the Prophet's victory over the Quraish and the Fall of Mecca, if ever it came, would establish his claim as a messenger of God, beyond a shadow of doubt. When Mecca fell, the tribes hastened, of their own accord to welcome Islam.[3] But the Fall of Mecca reacted in a different way on the Hawazin and the Thaqīf. They were a war-like people who knew how to use their weapons.[4] Each success Islam

1. Here the author is a little ambiguous. What he means to say is that, as indicated by Zurqānī, Hunain lies between Mecca and Tā'if near the famous market town of Arabia, Dhū al-Majādh, which is three miles from 'Arafa.

2. Qaḍī 'Ayād also is of the same opinion. But Hafiz Ibn Hajar following Ibn Ishāq believed it to be the name of a valley other than Hunain in the region of Hawazin. (See Zurqānī and *Fath al-Bārī*, Account of Hawazin and Autās)—Sulaimān.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Fall of Mecca.

4. Margoliouth says, "The expansion and consolidation of the boundaries of Islam alarmed the Bedouin tribes as they loved the freedom of their desert most."

won added to their anxiety, threatening their eminence and domination. The Fall of Mecca made their chiefs consult with one another. They decided upon a mass attack on the Muslims. For this they assembled at Mecca.[1] Under this agreement the confederates marched out for a spirited attack, each tribe with a train of its women and children so that the danger to the honour of its women and children might goad them to stake their lives for their sake.

Nowithstanding a general league of the various branches of the parent tribes, the Ka'b and the Kilāb remained aloof. The chief command was entrusted to Mālik Ibn 'Auf,[2] who governed the Hawazin, while Duraid Ibn Simmah, a poet of repute and the head of the Ju'sham, was to accompany him as an adviser. Arab history still remembers both his deeds of valour and his poetic master-pieces. But he had seen a hundred summers and was a little more than a skeleton of bones. Yet he enjoyed the confidence of his people for his sagacity and sound judgment, and the request for his partnership came from Mālik himself. He was carried to the field of battle seated on a bed. "What place is this ?", he asked and was told it was Autās. "That is a right place for a battle-field ?", said he, "the soil here is neither too hard nor so soft as to make one's feet sink in." "How is it," he asked again, "that I hear children crying ?" He was told that women and children had also come, that none might think of falling. "Nothing" said he, "can stop you, when once you begin to lose ground. Sword alone is serviceable in the battle-field. Unfortunately if we are defeated, the women shall add to our dishonour." Then he asked if the Ka'b and Kilāb had joined them. Being told that not a single man from these powerful tribes was participating, he

1. Zurqanī.

2. Mālik Ibn 'Auf embraced Islam after the battle of Tā'if. During the reign of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) he took part in the battle of Qadisiya and was appointed the governor of Damascus. See Zurqanī, Vol. III, p. 6—Sulaimān.

said, "Had it been a day destined to bring glory and honour, the Ka'b and the Kilāb would not have been absent." In his opinion the army should have been stationed at a safer place away from the open field, and a challenge thrown out from that site. But the thirty year old Mālik Ibn 'Aūf, in his youthful hot-headedness, refused to accept the suggestion and declared that Duraid had grown seedy and lost his brains.[1]

These developments being reported to the Prophet, he sent 'Abdullah Ibn Abī Jadra to verify the news. He came to Hunain as a spy, stayed with the army for several days and gathered all information. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was thus forced to start preparations. A loan was needed for the purchase of arms and provisions. Thirty thousand Dirhams were borrowed from 'Abdullah Ibn Rabī'ah, step brother of Abū Jahl, who was a moneyed man.[2] Safwān Ibn Umayya, the wealthiest man of Mecca, who had not yet given up his pagan faith, had a good name for hospitality. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked him to loan arms and he gave 100 coats of mail with their accessories.[3]

In the month of Shawwal, in the eighth year of the Hijra, (Jan-Feb., 630 C.E.), the Muslim army numbering 12,000 marched for Hunain, so splendidly equipped that some of the

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1. All these details are given in Tabarī.

2. *Musnad* Ibn Hanbal, Vol. IV, p. 36. In *Isāba* too we find similar report quoted from Imām Bukhāri. But the amount mentioned there is 10,000.

3. In *Muwaṭṭā'* it is reported that on the Prophet's asking for arms, Safwān sought for a clarification whether the arms were being demanded under compulsion or as a voluntary loan. (Showing that he would not make a compulsory loan). The Prophet told him that he wanted a voluntary loan. Abū Dāwūd, Chapter, "Security", has a similar report—Sulaimān.

Companions could not help giving vent to boastful utterance: "Who can overpower us now." God did not like these proud words. The Qur'ān says :

> "Assuredly Allāh hath succoured you on many fields and on the day of Hunain, when your number elated you, then it availed you naught, and the earth, wide as it is, straitened unto you ; then ye turned away in retreat. Thereafter Allāh sent down His calm upon His apostle and upon the believers, and He sent down hosts ye saw not and tormented those who would disbelieve : such is the meed of the infidels." (9 : 25, 26)

While expecting a sure victory, at the very first dash by the enemy, the Muslim forces seemed to have evaporated into nothing. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) looked round and found none of his faithful Companions by his side.[1] Abū Qatāda, who was present on the scene

1. But in other reports a few Companions are said to have remained firm. The two statements may be reconciled if we suppose that they refer to two different occasions, with an interval in between. Each narrator has given his own observations, as we shall shortly discuss in detail. The author did not give further details as promised. It is necessary, therefore, to deal with it at length. There are several points that need elaboration :

(*a*) In the first place, the author states the flight of the Muslims in the very first encounter. This is what Ibn Ishāq and other chroniclers have said. But an authentic report in the traditions says that fortune favoured the Muslims at the outset ; but they set about collecting booty. The enemy took advantage of the opportunity and the bowmen started raining arrows, which created disorder and confusion in the Muslim ranks. Bukhārī quotes the following from *Brā'*. "When we attacked them, they fell back beaten, then we set about collecting booty and they started shooting fast and thick, giving us no respite." (*Bukhārī*—Hunain).

(*b*) Another apparent cause of failure, was that the Muslim forces included a number of men who had joined them already resolved

(*Contd. on* p. 210

says: "When people took to flight, I saw a non-believer seated on the chest of a Muslim. I struck him on the shoulder from behind and my sword cut him deep through his coat of mail.

Contd. from p. 209)

to play false in the course of the battle. So *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* has that Umm Sulaim who had accompanied the forces asked the Prophet to put the "Tulaqā' " to death, for they alone were responsible for the defeat. Actual words are : "Besides ourselves, put these Tulaqā' to death they have brought on you the defeat." Imām Nowavī comments : "All had not fled. The Hypocrites, the Meccans who had been persuaded into Islam and the unbelievers of Mecca who had volunteered their services, but not accepted Islam took to flight, and this unexpected rout was also due to the enemy suddenly starting a shower of arrows, and the forces including a number of persons from Mecca, not yet firmly rooted in faith, who would have gladly welcomed a disastrous day for the Muslims. To this category also belonged the women and children who had come for the sake of booty.

The historian Tabarī, while dealing with this battle quotes words uttered by these Tulaqā', which reveal the fact that the Meccans' support was not sincere. (Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1660, Leyden Press). Of the early commentary writers, Ibn Jarīr Tabarī wrote : "Verily, the Tulaqā' turned their backs and left the Prophet." (Tabarī, Vol. I, p. 62).

Abū Hayyan Andulūsī, a medieval writer, says, "It is said the Meccan Tulaqā' took to flight to bring about the defeat of the Muslims." (*Bahr al-Muhīt*, Vol. V).

Of the later commentators, the author of *Ruh al-Ma'āni*, while discussing the Qur'ānic Chapter *al-Tauba*, writes : "First of all the Tulaqā' feigned a repulse, which created disorder among the Muslims and made them flee." (*Rūh al-Ma'āni*, Vol. I, p. 66).

(c) The third fact in this connection is that a body of Muslims stood firm to the last. The report that tends to make it doubtful appears in *Bukhārī* from Anas and is worded thus : "People fell back, till he (the Prophet) was left alone."

(*Contd. on* p. 211

But he turned back, and squeezed me so hard between his arms that I was despaired of life. But soon he fell cold and dead. In the mean time I saw 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) and asked, "How have the Muslims fared ?", and he

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Contd. from p. 210)

The author had the above report in view, but evidently it comes to this that there was no one just where the Prophet stood, and so, does Anas, further add that the Prophet called out to the *Anṣār* and they responded saying, "O' Messenger of Allāh, be pleased to know that we are close by you." Another report from Anas relating to this occasion appears earlier which states the response of the *Anṣārīs* in the words : "We are here, O' Messenger of Allāh, here in front of you." The two statements, namely that the Prophet was left alone and that his faithful Companions stood by him to the last have been reconciled by Hāfiz Ibn Hajar when he writes : "The report that the Prophet was left alone, in the face of the evidence proving that he had by him a body of Companions, may be understood to mean that the Prophet occupied the foremost position just facing the enemy, while those who still stood firm should have been some distance back from him."

Again Bukhārī itself, in the report from Barā, affirms that Abū Sufyān Ibn Hārith was at that time with the Prophet holding the reins of his animal. (Ghazwa Hunain, *Bukhārī*).

Muslim reports 'Abbās declaring that he and Abū Sufyān Ibn Hārith did not part with the Prophet. Besides the reports from Bukhārī and Muslim cited here, we should not lose sight of the following statements :

Ibn Abi Shaiba has a *Mursal* report from Hakam Ibn 'Utaiba stating the presence of four men with the Prophet.

Tirmidhī relates from Ibn 'Umar that on the day of Hunain there were not a hundred men with the Prophet. (*Tirmidhī*, Chapter al-Jihād).

Ahmad's *Musnad* (V. I, p. 453) and Hakam's report from 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd, say that there were eighty men left with the Prophet that day.

Baihaqī reports from Hārith Ibn Nu'mān that their number was hundred. See Zurqāni, Vol. III, p. 22.

(*Contd. on* p. 212

replied, "Such was the Will of Allāh."[1]

There were various causes responsible for the discomfiture. The newly converted Muslims[2] of Mecca composed the major part of the vanguard under the command of Khālid. In youthful pride they had not even cared to come properly armed.[3] The army had two thousand non-Muslims, technically known as "Tulaqā'." The Hawāzin were the best shots and marksmen of Arabia ; not a single arrow they shot ever missed

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Contd. from p. 211)

Ibn Ishāq says that of the *Muhājirs*, the *Anṣāris* and members of the Prophet's family, the following were by his side—Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Alī, 'Abbās, Ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Abū Sufyān Ibn Hārith, Ja'far Ibn Abū Sufyān Ibn Hārith, Fadal Ibn 'Abbās, Rabī'a Ibn Hārith, Usāma Ibn Zaid, Aiman Ibn Umm Aiman.

This long discussion is simply intended to prove that the words of Anas (He was left alone) cannot hold good in the literal sense. Hafiz Ibn Hajar explains them saying that the Prophet stood ahead and the rest away behind him. It is, however, better explained by supposing "that the Prophet was left alone" is simply an expression of the smallness of the number and not of the total absense of such as stood firm.

More explanations have been advanced to account for the difference of versions regarding the men that held on. (See Zurqānī, Vol. III, p. 42). It appears that the followers happened to be dispersed around the Prophet and rallied round him in small detachments till their number was fairly large, and that is why various sources quote various numbers—Sulaimān.

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Battle of Hunain, Vol. I, p. 618.

2. This sentence of the author is not quite clear. It means that they had recited the Creed (*Kalima*) and got converted as is stated in *'Umdat al-Qārī*, Vol. VIII, p. 359, Egypt Edition and *Sharah Muslim* Nowa'vī, Ghazwa *al-Nisā Ma'al Rijāl*. Yet they were fresh converts, not staunch of faith, and had not developed that perseverance and firmness which characterised the *Muhajirs* and *Ansārīs*—Sulaimān.

3. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter Jihād (Holy War).

the aim.[1] Having arrived earlier, the enemy had occupied suitable positions and posted their archers in the vales, caves and passes of the mountain. The Muslims launched the attack very early in the morning when the light was still dim. The battle-field had a sharp slope, that made a firm stand difficult. As the Muslims advanced for attack, they were confronted by thousands ; the bowmen came out of their hidings showering their unfailing arrows. The vanguard had to fall back in a disorderly manner. Thus pressed, the main body was unable to hold on. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* has described it thus : "All fell back and he (the Prophet) was left alone."[2]

Arrows poured down like a torrential rain, twelve thousand warriors had melted away, but there was one, unmoved at his post—one who was by himself a match for a whole army, a whole nation, a whole country, nay the whole universe.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) looked to the right and called out to the *Anṣārīs*, and quick came the reply, "Here we are." He looked to the left and called out in the same way and quick came a similar response. He then dismounted, and in a solemn prophetic tone declared : "I am the Servant of Allāh and His Messenger."[3] In another version given by Bukhārī we are told that the Prophet recited the lines : "I am the Messenger of Allāh, and this is no untruth, and I am the grandson of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib."

'Abbās had a loud voice, the Prophet ordered him to call the *Anṣars* and the *Muhājirs*. 'Abbās cried at the top of his voice, "O' *Anṣār* People, O' men of the Tree" (referring to the Oath taken under the tree at Hudaibiya.). To this clarion call, the entire force responded with a wonderful promptitude

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter on Jihād.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 621, Chapter Ghazwa Tā'if.
3. *Ibid.*,

and tried to rally round the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). In the midst of the thick disorderly multitude, horses could not always turn round about ; their riders cast off the armour and dismounted. The tide turned all of a sudden. Now the enemy was showing a clean pair of heels, and those that did not, had a pair of iron cuffs on their wrists. The Banū Mālik (an off-shoot of the Banū Thaqīf) put up a resolute fight. They had lost seventy men when their flag-bearer, 'Uthmān Ibn 'Abdullāh, fell and they took to flight.

A portion of the vanquished army rallied at Autās,[1] and the rest including their leader, Mālik Ibn 'Aūf, sought shelter at Tā'if.

Autas

Duraid Ibn Simma, with a force numbering several thousand men, retreated to Autās. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) detailed a small contingent under Abū 'Āmir Ash'arī to crush them. Abū 'Āmir was slain by the son of Abū Duraid who snatched away the flag. At this Abū Mūsa Ash'arī dashed forward, dealt a fatal blow, and got back the flag.[2] Duraid was riding a camel, seated in a litter. Rabī'a Ibn Rāfi' dealt a blow with his sword ; but the blow proved ineffective. "Your mother," said Duraid,

1. In the foregoing pages the enemy is stated to have encamped at Autās—a place which Duraid commended as a suitable site. Here we are told that the force vanquished at Hunain rallied at Autās. This creates inconsistency. As mentioned in *Asah al-Siyār* (of Abū Barkāt 'Abd al-Ra'ūf Danapūrī) the forces fought each other at Hunain. After their defeat at Hunain, the fleeing forces of the Hawazin retreated in three columns. One column sought shelter in Tā'if under Mālik Ibn 'Aūf, the second group went to Autās and they included Duraid Ibn Simma and the third party sought shelter in Nakhla'. Any how the actual fight took place at Hunain—Translator.

2. *Musnad*, Ibn Hanbal, Vol. IV, p. 399.

"did not give you good weapons. Get a good sword from my litter, and when you go back to your mother tell her that you have killed Duraid." Later on when Rabī'a told of his death to his mother, she said, "By God, Duraid had seen three of your mothers set free."[1]

Prisoners taken could be counted in thousands, and among them was Shaimā', the foster-sister of the Prophet. When she was captured, she said that she was a sister of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). They brought her to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) for verification. She uncovered her back and showed a scar made when he had once bitten her in his childhood. Love brought tears to the eyes of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), he spread his own sheet of cloth for her, talked affectionately and presented her with a few camels and goats, adding that she might go to her people if she chose or live with him.[2] Family attachment induced her to prefer home and she was escorted back to her native place with all honour.[3]

Siege of Tā'if

The remnants of the force vanquished at Hunain sought refuge at Tā'if and prepared to make a stand again. Tā'if was a safe place, so called because it had a well running round the city. The Thaqīf tribe settled there was known for its chivalry and enjoyed a distinguished status almost at par with that of the Quraish. Their chief, 'Urwa Ibn Mas'ūd, was married to the daughter of Abū Sufyān, the father of Amīr Mu'āwiya. The Meccans used to say that the Qur'ān, if it was a revelation, ought to have been revealed to one of the chiefs of Mecca or of Tā'if. Its people were also skilled in the

1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1666, European Edition.

2. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, *Isāba* and Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1668.

3. Tabarī, European Edition, Vol. III, p. 1669.

art of war. Tabarī and Ibn Ishāq say that 'Urwa Ibn Mas'ūd and Ghīlan Ibn Salama had travelled to Jarash (a district in Yaman) and there learnt how to make and use testudoes, ballistas, and battering engines to destroy forts.[1]

Tā'if had a well-protected fort. The citizens, and the routed forces from Hunain, put it in repairs and stored supplies enough for a year. Battering rams were fixed on all sides and archers posted at all points.[2]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered the booty and the prisoners to be kept under guard at a place known as Ji'rrana, while he himself marched for Tā'if. Khālid had been sent with an advance party. Ultimately the siege began, and for the first time in the annals of Islam, were used the devices like catapults, the ballistas and battering rams to destroy a fort. The enemy showered hot iron-rods at the testudoes ; the assailants had to fall back under the down-pour of arrows and many were wounded. The siege went on for twenty days but the city could not be taken. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called Naufal Ibn Mu'āwiya and sought his advice. He said that the fox had got into his den ; with protracted efforts he might be caught, but if left to himself, there was nothing to be afraid of.

As the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had taken up arms merely in defence so he ordered the siege to be raised. The Companions requested the Prophet to pray against these people ; and the Prophet prayed thus : "O' God, show the people of Thaqīf the right path and let Thy grace guide them to me."[3]

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1. Tabarī, European Edition, Vol. III, p. 1669.

2. *Tarikh Khamis*, Vol. II, p. 122 and Ibn Sa'd.

3. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Chapter on Maghāzī, p. 115.

Distribution of Booty

Having raised the siege, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came to Ji'rrāna. The booty stored there was considerable. Besides 6,000 captives, there were 24,000 camels, more than 40,000 goats and 4,000 Ūqiyahs[1] of silver.[2] The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) waited, expecting the relations of the prisoners to come and negotiate with him, but several days passed by and none turned up. The booty was divided into five portions. Four were distributed as usual among the soldiers and the fifth was reserved for the poor and the needy in the *Bait al-Māl.*

Most of the Meccan leaders who had recently embraced Islam were still wavering in their faith. It is they the Qur'ān has referred to as *Mu'allifāt al-Qulūb,* and named as one of the categories of people entitled to receive Zakāt (poor-rate or alms). While portioning out the gains of the battle, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was most generous to these people as the following statement should show :

1.	Abū Sufyān and his children	300 camels and 120 ūqiyahs of silver.
2.	Hakīm Ibn Hizām	200 camels
3.	Nudair Ibn Hārith Ibn Kaladah Thaqafī.	100 camels
4.	Safwān Ibn Umayya	100 camels
5.	Qais Ibn 'Adī	100 camels
6.	Suhail Ibn 'Amr	100 camels
7.	Huwaitib Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza	100 camels

1. Uqiyah : Equal to an ounce.

2. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Chapter on Maghāzī, p. 110.

Besides these three non-Meccan chiefs who were newly converted Muslims too received their share ; and they were the following :

1.	Aqra' Ibn Hābis (Tamīmī)	100 camels
2.	'Uyaina Ibn Hisn Fazarī	100 camels
3.	Mālik Ibn 'Aūf Nadrī	100 camels

Many others got fifty camels each. But generally each soldier got four camels and forty goats, the horsemen getting thrice the share of the footmen, *i.e.*, twelve camels and one hundred and twenty goats each.[1]

The recipients of these bounteous shares were mostly the Meccans recently converted. The *Anṣārīs* felt it, and some of them said, "The Prophet rewarded the Quraish and ignored us, whereas the blood of the Quraish still trickles from our sword-blades."[2] Others grumbled saying, "We are called when times go hard, but gains fall in the way of others."[3]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) heard of the murmurings and called the *Anṣārīs*. A leather tent was pitched where they all assembled. He asked them if they had said so. The *Anṣārs* replied, "None of our elders ever uttered such words, the young men did it."[4] *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Būkhārī*, Chapter, "Virtues of the *Anṣārīs*," however, reports that the *Anṣārīs* being never used to lying, admitted that the Prophet's information was correct. The Prophet's address to the *Anṣārīs* on this occasion is a rare piece of rhetoric. He said, "Is it not correct that you were gone astray, and

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1. The horseman's share has previously been stated to be twice that of the foot-man, which was probably incorrect or rather a misprint—Translator.

2. *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Tā'if.

3. *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Nizāmī Press, p. 621.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 620, Chapter Ghazwa Tā'if.

through me God guided you to the right path. You were divided and disunited, and God blessed you with unity. You were poor and through me God made you rich ?" As the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) spoke each sentence, the *Anṣārīs* answered to it in the words, "To Allāh and His Messenger we stand most indebted."[1]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Nay, say, O' Muhammad, we believed in thee when others rejected thee, we gave thee an asylum when thou wast forsaken ; we helped thee, in every way when thou wast penniless." "Yes", continued the Prophet, "you make these answers and I shall say you are right. But O' *Anṣārīs*, won't you like to be returning with Muhammad in your midst, while others should be going away with goats and camels." And they burst forth into a cry, "We want nothing else but Muhammad." Most of them got their beards wet with tears. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) explained to them that the Meccans were new to the faith, they were given, what they got, to win their hearts, and not of right.[2]

Till now the captives were held up at Ji'rrāna. At last a respectable delegation waited upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with a request to set them free. This was the tribe to which had belonged the Prophet's foster mother Halīma. The chief of the tribe, Zuhair Ibn Surad, stood up and addressed the Prophet thus : "Among the women confined in the huts are your aunts, the sisters of your father and of your mother. By God, if a king of Arabia had been given a suck by any of our women, we would have hoped much from him, but from you we hope even more than that." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "You may claim what falls to the share

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, and *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. VIII, p. 40.

2. *Fath al-Bārī*.

of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's family. But in case you desire all to be set free, then plead your case after the noon-prayers in the presence of all." After the mid-day prayers they made that request. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "I have a right to relinquish the share of my own family. As for the rest, I recommend their case to all the Muslims." The *Muhājirs* and the *Anṣārs* instantly declared that they were foregoing their shares as well. Six thousand were set free in a lot.[1]

Miscellaneous Incidents

It was in this year that a son was born to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) from his wife, Māriya Qibtiya. The Prophet named him Ibrāhīm and was very affectionate to him. But the baby lived a year and a half (seventeen or eighteen months). On the day Ibrāhīm died, the sun had an eclipse. The Arabs believed that the eclipse of the sun was the sign of a great man's death. People thought it was due, in this instance to Ibrāhīm's death. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) called the faithfuls together and delivered a sermon. He explained to them that the sun and moon were the creations of God and their eclipse had nothing to do with the life or death of any-body. After this he offered the special congregational prayer, known as the "Prayer of the Eclipse."[2] The Prophet's daughter Zainab died this year.

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1. Tabarī, Vol. III, p. 1676.

Note. This is what Tabarī says. In other books it is stated on good authority that Aqra' Ibn Hābis, 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn and 'Abbās Ibn Mirdās refused to forego their share. Seeing their stubbornness, the Prophet promised to give them six time more of what they had recieved. At this they agreed. 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn still resisted, and it was with great difficulty and efforts that he consented—Translator.

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter "Kusūf or Eclipse of the Sun."

Takh'īr or Temporary Separation[1]

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) led an austere life detached from the petty, sordid affairs of the world. Sometimes there was no cooking on his hearth for two whole months, and going without food was a frequent experience of the family. All his life he never had two square meals on a day.

The holy wives were after all females, the tender sex that loves most of all, show and ornaments, luxury and comfort. The company of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had raised them to a spiritual level far above their kind ; yet the women in them still lived. Moreover, they could not fail to see that the conquests of Islam were expanding day by day, and that even a negligible portion of the booty that had flowed in would ensure to them a comfortable living. In these circumstances, it was natural that their contentment and resignation should give way.

The holy wives mostly hailed from respectable houses. Umm Habība was the daughter of a Quraish dignitary, Juwairiya was a daughter of the then chief of the Banū Mustaliq, while Safia, came from the ruling family of Khaibar. Then there was 'Ā'isha, daughter of Abū Bakr, and Ḥafṣa, the daughter of 'Umar Farūq. They were not super-human, and as such not free from self-regard ; none would ever yield

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1. Some traditionists hold that this took place in Dhu'l-Hijja in the 5th year of the Hijra. This misunderstanding is due to some reports which mention that it took place before the injunction of *Purdah*. But the report on the authority of 'Umar, says that when he noticed inexplicable anxiety among the Muslims, which an incomplete knowledge of facts had created and caused, he thought that the king of the Ghassān had invaded as they were all expecting. The attack by the king of the Ghassān was feared in the ninth year of the Hijra. Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Dumyati have convincingly proved that it took place in the beginning of the 9th year of the Hijra. Vide, *Fatḥ al-Barī*, Vol. IX, p. 250—Sulaimān.

to her second on a point of honour. With all that, their intense devotion to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was no whit less than that of the poet who could not bear to see the beloved in the company of his own shadow.

One day the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remained with Zainab longer than usual. Zainab (Allāh be pleased with her) had, somehow, come by a little honey, and she served it before the Prophet, who partook of it as he had a liking for honey. This made him stay longer than was his wont. 'Ā'isha's jealousy was roused. She settled with Ḥafṣa that they should each tell the Prophet, when he came to their apartments, that his mouth smelt of *Maghafir* (a kind of flower sucked by the bees). They did so, and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) took an oath never to take or taste honey. Then the following Verse was revealed :

> "O' Prophet ! why makest thou unlawful that which Allāh hath made lawful unto thee, seeking the good-will of thy wives ? And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful." (66 : 1)

'Allāma 'Ainī, in his commentary on *Bukhārī*, says : "To those who may ask how far it was lawful for 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them) to tell a lie and conspire against the Prophet, the answer is that 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was very young, and moreover she did not mean to tease the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). It was simply of a piece with the plans that women often devise out of jealousy against a second wife."

But this explanation of the 'Allāma is hardly acceptable. Firstly, the incident is connected with *'Ila* or *Takh'ir* (temporay separation), that took place in the ninth year of the Hijra (631 C.E.) ; and at that time 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) was a young girl, the rest of the wives who combined against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh

be upon him) were quite matured—Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) herself was 35 when married.[1]

We hold that they did not lie when they drew the Prophet's attention to the smell. There is a consensus of report on the fact that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was a man of highly refined taste and could not tolerate the least offensive smell.[2] However the Holy Prophet's wives making a common cause may appear to be objectionable. But none of us believes that the holy wives were infallible, or that they did not resort to permissible means to achieve their ends. It was in these days that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) confided a secret to Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) and warned her not to divulge it to any one. But she passed it on to 'Ā'isha, (Allāh be pleased with her), when the following Verse was revealed :

> "And recall what time the Prophet confided a story unto one of his spouses then she disclosed it, and Allāh apprised him thereof, he made known part thereof and withheld part. Then when he had apprised her of it, she said : Who hath acquainted thee therewith ? He said the Knower, the Aware hath acquainted me." (66 : 3)

There was a growing feeling of estrangement among holy wives. 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them) made a demonstration, that is, joined hands to exert pressure upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Then, concerning 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them), the following Verses were revealed :

"If ye both turn to God, then indeed your hearts are

1. This incident has been dealt with in greater detail by Bukhārī in the Chapter on Divorce. There it is mentioned that to this scheme other holy wives too had been made a party and the first to say it was Sudah.

2. *Musnad*, Ibn Ḥanbal, Vol. VI, p. 249.

already inclined. And if ye support each other against him, then verily Allāh ! his friend is He and Gabriel and so are the righteous believers; and furthermore the angels are his aiders." (66 : 4)

There were special motives that brought 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them) together. But the demand for higher subsistence was a common cause. This demand to squeeze something out deprived the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) of his peace of mind to such an extent that he took a vow not to see his wives for a month. Accidentally, during these very days, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) fell from horse-back and got his shin wounded. So he passed his time in isolation on an upper storey.[1] These circumstances led people think that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had divorced his wives. We described the subsequent events in the words of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) who has given details both interesting and convincing. He speaks of certain events also which throw greater light on the main theme.[2]

1. The word used by the traditionists for the upper storey is *Mashrabah*. This word was specially used for the upper floor of Umm Ibrahīm (Mariyah Qibtīyah). So it led people to conclude that this was the apartment where the Prophet had taken his abode. But this is incorrect.

   In fact the residence of Umm Ibrahīm was situated outside the city of Medina. From the report narrated by 'Umar (mentioned in all the Six Authentic Sihah) and quoted by the author later on, it is clear that this was a place close to the house of Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) and the Holy Mosque, so that 'Umar could quickly walk to and from that place. In Abū Dāwūd it is mentioned that this apartment was the apartment of 'Ā'isha and stood near the Mosque and the apartments of the other wives.

2. This incident has been mentioned in various Chapters of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, viz.*, Book of Marriage Contract, of Divorce and Book of Knowledge. In Muslim (Chapter Marriage Contract) too it is mentioned with a slight difference. The variation lies in the less important details. We have placed together all the statements,

'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) says : "I lived near the house of an *Anṣārī* (Aūs Ibn Khaulī or 'Itbān Ibn Mālik). Each of us attended upon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on alternate days turn by turn."

"The Quraish had kept their wives under control and maintained a dominant position in the house. But here in Medīna, the wives of the *Anṣārīs* ruled over their husbands. Infected by their example, our wives too adopted their ways. One day I had occasion to say some harsh words to my wife, and she paid me back with a retort. How she dared to bandy words with me, I asked, and she said, that I did not count, when the wives of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself could answer him back and remain sullen and sulky a whole day long. That was terrible thing, I thought, and got up and went straight to Ḥafṣa (daughter of 'Umar and wife of the Prophet) and asked her if she was really used to be in the sulks with the Prophet. She admitted. I told her to remember that the Prophet's displeasure meant the displeasure of Allāh. I said to her that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had a regard for me, otherwise he would have divorced her. Then I went to Umm Salama (Allāh be pleased with her) and made a similar complaint. She protested that I was interfering in every matter, even in the private affairs between him and his wives. I was silenced, and left."

"A little later at night, my neighbour, the *Anṣārī*, called at my place and knocked heavily at the door. I got up perplexed, opened the door, and asked him what was wrong there. "Terrible", he said. I enquired if the Ghassānides[1] had attacked Medīna. He said, "Not that ; but more terrible than that. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon

1. The Ghassanides were an Arab tribe that ruled over Syria under the overlordship of the Roman (the Byzantine Hiracleus). Instigated by the Byzantians, they were planning an attack on Medina.

him) has divorced his wives ! Next day I came to Medīna early, and offered my morning Prayer with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The Prayer being over, the Prophet retired to the attic alone. I came to Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) and found her weeping. I told her that I had warned her earlier. Then I again returned to the Holy Mosque. There I saw the Companions sitting near the pulpit, all in tears. I sat by them, but feeling ill at ease all the time. I went to the Prophet's attic and asked his chief attendant Rabāh, to inform him of my arrival. He did but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) made no reply. I again returned to the Holy Mosque. Again I was restless, repaired to the attic, and requested the man at the door to ask for permission. Again there was no reply. Then in a loud voice I called out, 'Rabāh ask the Prophet to permit me to come in. He may be thinking that I have come to plead for Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her). By God, if ordered, I can chop off Ḥafṣa's head and present it to him'. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) allowed admittance. I saw him lying on a cot without any bedding whatsoever, his skin showing marks of the fibrous webbing the bed-stead was netted with.[1] Surveying the room, I saw a handful of barley at a place, and the skin of some animal hung to a peg in a corner. Tears trickled down my eyes. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked why I wept. I said, "To think of Caesars and monarchs of Persia virtually living in the gardens of Eden, and you a Prophet, dragging on in such a plight." To this the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "Are you not satisfied with this partition that Caesars and Emperors should have things of this world while we should partake of the bounties of the

1. In certain reports the word *Husair* meaning a mat has been used. In other reports the word used is *Siryah* or cot. Ibn Hajar has tried to reconcile both the versions saying that it was a cot with a netting of mat as was common in Arabia. *Fath al-Bari*, Vol., IX, p. 251.

Next". Then I asked the Prophet if he had divorced his wives, and he replied in the negative. "*Allāhu Akbar*" (God is Great), I cried and told the Prophet that the Companions were sitting dejected in the Mosque; I asked for his permission to go there and inform them that the rumour was baseless. The time-limit of the self-imposed separation having expired, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) also came down and allowed access to all.[1] This was the occasion for the revelation :

> "O' Prophet, say unto thy wives : If it be that ye seek the world's life and the adornment thereof, then come, I shall make a provision for you and shall release you with a handsome release. And if ye seek Allāh and His Apostle and the abode of the Hereafter, then verily Allāh hath gotten ready for the well-doers among you a mighty hire." (The Qur'ān)

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was thus instructed to inform his wives that there were two alternatives for them—this world or the Hereafter. If they so desired he might present them with parting robes and honourably send them off, and if they sought Allāh, His

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1. It is agreed that the Prophet remained in the attic for 29 days. This dialogue between the Prophet and 'Umar took place either on the first day or on the last. The first part of the report shows that this happened on the first day. But the last part shows that it took place on the 29th day. The author has relied on the last part of it and supposed it to have taken on the 29th day. But this implies that 'Umar and other Companions could not know of it for days. This is not the view any one can take. So the traditionists have suggested that the major part of this dialogue took place on the first day, but the portion stating the Prophet coming down relates to the last day. The narrator failed to put in the intervening link. From the report mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Chapter Marriage Contract) this fact has been clearly known. So the reader should read this portion preceded by the clause : "When the time vowed for separation (that is a month) was over—Sulaimān.

Apostle, and eternal life, they were to know that Allāh had reserved a mighty reward for those who do good deeds.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came down at the end of the month and first called on 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) as she had taken a leading part in the affair. He communicated to her what God had enjoined, to which she replied, "I forsake everything and choose Allāh and His Apostle." The other wives returned similar answers.

The separation, the offer of alternatives and the demonstration by Ḥafṣa and 'Ā'isha, (Allāh be pleased with them) have generally been so narrated that they appear to have been detached incidents that took place at different times. And so a reader, content with appearances, may be misled to construe that the domestic life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was always unpleasant. The fact, however, is that all these three incidents took place at one and the same time and form the links of the same chain. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Chapter on Marriage Contract, there is a report on the authority of 'Abbās (Allāh be pleased with him), clarifying that the alliance of the wives, the Prophet's isolation, the disclosure of the secret and the revelation offering the choice are parts of a single whole.

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, having given various reasons for the Prophet's self-imposed isolation, says, "In view of the Prophet's gentle manners, his large-heartedness and his all-forgiving nature, this was the most appropriate course to be taken, and he would not have done so, unless his wives had behaved that way more than once."[1]

The Verse concerning the pact between the wives shows that it must have been highly harmful plot pregnant with fearful consequences. The Verse says :

"And if ye support each other against him, then verily

1. *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. IX, p. 254.

Allāh is his, He and Gabriel and so are the righteous believers ; and furthermore the angels are his aiders."
(66 : 4)

It clearly indicates that if the pact stood, then God, Gabriel and all the doers of good were there to help the Prophet, and moreover all the angels.

The reason for the alliance as inferred from the reports seems to have been merely a demand for increased subsistence, or, if the report concerning Māriyah Qibtiyah be taken to be true, it might have been a demand for her separation. But none of these reasons is weighty enough ; nor could a pact between Ḥafṣa and 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with them) portend a danger so serious as to require the help of Allāh and His angels.

This has led some writers to surmise that the alliance had an extraordinary significance. Medīna harboured a large number of Hypocrites reckoned at four hundred. These mischief mongers were always on the look-out for any plan that might sow the seed of discord in the family of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and among his Companions. Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, in his *Isāba*, speaks of a lady Umm Jildah who used to stir up the holy wives against one another. They had already seen a ray of hope in the incident of *Ifk* (false accusation). For full fifteen days, 'Ā'isha (Allāh be pleased with her) had been out of favour with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Hassan had joined the accusers, so had Hamnah, the Prophet's sister-in-law, the sister of Prophet's wife, Zainab. She had been openly giving publicity to the calumny. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) had stopped his financial help to one of his relations, Mistah, who had got involved in it. In short, had not Allāh testified to 'Ā'isha's unblemished character, a great mischief would have been done.

The strained relations in the Prophet's home and the

demands pressed by his wives, must have certainly come to the knowledge of the false Muslims. Naturally they should have thought of fanning the differences ; and the fact that 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them) had led the united demonstration should have held out the prospect of their fathers, Abū Bakr and 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with them), making a common cause with them. They could not realize that, to Abū Bakr and 'Umar 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa were much less valuable than a handful of dust from under the feet of the master. 'Umar, when the Prophet's permission to show him in was too long in coming, had called aloud that he might come with the head of Ḥafṣa, if the Prophet so desired.

The Verse under reference is addressed to the Hypocrites, and declares that, even if 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with them) keep united and play as tools in the hands of the Hypocrites, God stands pledged to help the Prophet, and with Allāh are Gabriel and all the angels.

False Stories

Narrators fond of weaving yarns have so cunningly distorted facts that historians and biographers of good reputation were persuaded to incorporate them in their writings as authentic reports. We, therefore, hope to be excused for further thrashing out the topic.

That there was something the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had denied to himself as a concession to the wishes of his wives, is an undisputed fact, to which the Qur'ān itself bears testimony. What that something was, has been a debatable point. There are reports that this debatable "Something" was Māriyah Qibtiya alleged to have been a slave-girl presented to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) by the ruler of Egypt. The report speaking of Mariyah Qibtiyah has been recorded at length with different series of narrators. These versions also

say that the secret Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) had disclosed concerned Māriyah Qibtiyah and none else.

All these reports are wholly fabricated and unwarranted and are not worth of any attention. But we are compelled to discuss their value, for they form the stock-in-trade of the European critics who have tried to disparage the Prophet's moral character.

There is a good deal of difference in the details of narrations, but the factor common to all is that Māriyah Qibtiyah was a low-born slave-girl living in the Prophet's house not a properly wedded wife, and that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had taken a self-denying vow only to please Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her). Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, while discussing *Sūrah Tahrīm* (Chapter of The Forbidden) in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, writes : "And Sa'īd Ibn Mansūr reports through an authentic chain, which terminates at Masrūq, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) promised on oath to Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) not to seek privacy with his slave-girl."

The Hāfiz then adds several reports from *Musnad* (Haitham Ibn Kalīb) and Tabrānī ; one of which runs thus : "And Tabrānī, in connection with Dahhāk, reports from Ibn 'Abbās that Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her), on entering her house found the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on the same bed with Māriyah. Upon this she took her to task."[1]

Ibn Sa'd and Waqidī have given this report a more disagreeable colour, which we omit, for the fact is that all these stories are mere fabrications.

'Allāma 'Ainī in his commentary on *Bukhari* says :

"As to the occasion when this Verse was revealed, the

1. *Fath al-Bari*, Egypt Edition, Vol. VIII, p. 50.

true report is that it refers to the honey affair, and not any affair about Māriyah, which is described in books other than the two Authentic Collections (*Bukhārī* and *Muslim*). Nowāvī has observed that Māriyah's story does not stand authentically reported."[1]

The tradition in question appears differently reported in the commentary by Ibn Jarīr and in the *Musnad* Haitham and Tabrānī. These books being a lumber-house of facts and fiction, it is not safe to make much of anything they say, unless it is reported with specific references. Of these versions Hāfiz Ibn Hajar confirms only the one having Masrūq at the top of the chain.[2]

This version, however, does not name Māriyah Qibtiyah. It only asserts that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) promised on oath in the presence of Ḥafṣa (Allāh be pleased with her) not to seek privacy with his slave-girl and that she would thenceforward be forbidden to him. Moreover, Masrūq is a Tabi'ī (one who has met or seen a Companion). He had not seen the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself and hence the report, as technically classed by traditionists, is *Munqatā'* *i.e.*, with the chain cut off without being traced up to a Companion.

Another version of this report, with a different chain, is declared to be sound by Hāfiz Ibn Hajar in his commentary of the Qur'ān. But this chain includes a narrator named 'Abd al-Mālik Raqāshī, and of him Dār Qutnī speaks in these words : "He is frequently mistaken in naming authorities as well as reporting exact words."

Now it is known for certain that none of the Six Authentic Collections, held to be most authentic and known

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1. 'Ainī, Commentary on *Bukhārī*, Chapter on Nuptial.

2. *Fath al-Barī*, Commentary on *Sūrah Tahrīm*.

as Sihāh Sittah, contains this report about Māriyah.[1] It is also undisputed that the occasion when *Sūrah Tahrīm* was revealed was, as recorded in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, the service of honey. It is a fact which is unrefutably proved. Imām Nowāvī, one of the highest authorities on traditions, has unambiguously declared that concerning Māriyah there is not a single reliable report. Of the chains said to be sound by Hafiz Ibn Hajar and Ibn Kathīr, one goes only half way up, and the other includes a narrator who frequently erred. In the face of these facts none would dare to affirm that the report is worthy of reliance.

The foregoing discourse was meant to judge the authenticity of the statement in the light of reported evidence. Weighed against reason it has little need for argumentation. The obscene facts described in these reports, particularly the details given by Tabarī and others of his like, are too

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1. That is, with the mention of Māriyah's name and with the addition of the obscene details. It does stand in Nasā'i, Chapter al-Ghairah, only saying that, borne by the pressure of 'Ā'isha and Ḥafṣa, the Prophet had forbidden to himself a slave-girl. But one of the narrators in the chain is unsound.

2. The Author discusses the report about Māriyah Qibtiyah mainly on the basis of weak reports. As to circumstantial evidence, he only points out that it is unthinkable in the case of a character so superbly moral and modest as of the Prophet. But it may also be pointed out that the holy wives are said to begin their protest against Māriyah some two years after her coming over to the Prophet, which makes the whole story extremely doubtful. Again that Māriyah had been living as a slave-girl, is highly improbable as was residing away from the Mosque on the outskirts of the city and could not 'therefore, render any domestic service to the Prophet or any of the other wives. The situation of her residence also rules out the probability of Ḥafṣa

(*Contd. on p.* 234

nasty to be ascribed even to a man of ordinary morals, much less to the august personality who was purity and piety incarnate.[2]

Contd. from p. 233)

breaking into her privacy. Moreover, the 'Allāmah has already proved that Māriyah Qibtiyah was not a slave-girl, but a duly wedded wife of the Prophet and that she came of a respectable family of the Egyptians. To call her a slave-girl is in itself a distortion of facts—Translator.

THE BATTLE OF TABUK

(Rajab 9 Hijra. *i.e.*, Nov. 635 C.E.)

Tabūk is a wellk-nown place, fourteen stages from Medīna half way to Damascus.

Since the battle of Mūta, the Byzantine government had been determined to invade Arabia. The Ghassanide family ruling over Syria, as vassals to the Romans, was Christian by faith. The Roman Emperor, therefore, appointed it to manage the expedition. The news of their expected invasion was often in the air in Medīna. We remember how, 'Itbān Ibn Mālik, on hearing of the Prophet's separation, had called on 'Umar and expressed his horror, and how 'Umar, failing to understand his meaning, had asked if the Ghassānides had come.[1]

The Nibatāian traders from Syria used to visit Medīna to sell their olive oil. Once they came with the news that the Byzantians had mobilized a huge force in Syria, had paid them off for a year in advance, and had been joined by all the tribesmen of Judhām, Lakhum, Ghassān and the tribes of Iela (also written as Aylā). They reported that the advance parties of the enemy force had already arrived at Balqā'. Mawāhib Ladunniyah quotes from Tabarī the statement that the Christians in Arabia addressed letters to Hiracleus, saying that Muhammad (God forbid) had died and the entire country was starving owing to a severe famine. Hiracleus then sent an army of forty thousand.

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī.*

Any how, the news was bruited abroad all over the country, and the circumstances then existing left no room for doubt. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered preparations to start. Unfortunately a severe famine was raging at the time and heat was intense. People did not therefore, feel disposed to leave their homes.[1] The hypocrites who had so far paid only lip-service to Islam now got exposed ; they shirked, and dissuaded others, "Don't you go out of doors in such heat," they said.

Suwailam was a Jew. His residence was the rendezvous of all the dissemblers, where people were persuaded not to join the army. The country being threatened with Christian aggression, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked the tribes to cooperate with men and money. From amongst the Companions, 'Uthmān (Allāh be pleased with him) contributed two hundred Ūqiyahs (about 200 ounces) of silver and two hundred strings of camel. So did most of the Companions. They came forward with large contributions. A number of volunteers could not proceed for want of equipment and funds. The following Verses of the Chapter of *al-Tauba* refer to these volunteers :

> "Nor on those who, when they came unto thee that thou mightest mount them and thou saidst : 'I find not any animal to mount you on,' turned back while their eyes overflowed with tears for grief that they could not find aught to expend." (9 : 92)

As a rule, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be

1. Margoliouth has a story that the *Anṣārīs* felt disheartened as they had got nothing out of the gains at Hunain ; and thought it was not their business to take up arms when the fruits of victory would go to others. But this is simply the product of Margoliouth's imaginative brain ; and such guess-work in the face of Qur'ānic statements is unwarranted.

upon him) left somebody in charge of Medīna whenever he used to be off on an expedition. Now the members of his household did not accompany him, some trusted kinsman had to stay to look after the ladies. The duty fell to the lot of 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him). He protested against being left out to stay with women and children. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said in reply, "would you not be to me what Aaron was to Moses ?"[1]

At last the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came out of Medīna with a force of thirty thousand, which included ten thousand horsemen.[2] The route lay through the memorable ruins spoken of in the Qur'ān, *i.e.*, the buildings which the Thamūd people had cut in rocks. This being a place that had once been the scene of the retributive justice of God, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered that none was to stay there, nor were they to drink or make any other use of water.

On reaching Tabūk, the rumour was found to be false yet not without a core of truth. The Ghassānide chief had been wire-pulling throughout Arabia. *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, when speaking of the battle of Tabūk, says that a messenger from Syria handed over to Ka'b Ibn Mālik a letter from the Ghassānide chief, which read as follows : "I have come to know that you could not obtain due recognition from Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). So you may come to me. My treatment with you shall be worthy of your position." Ka'b, though fallen into disfavour with the Prophet, put the letter into the fire.[3]

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stayed at Tabūk for twenty days. The chief of Ayla named

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ghazwa Tabūk.

2. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd.

3. This letter was sent to Ka'b after the Prophet's return from the battle of Tabūk and not before it—Translator.

Yūhanna waited upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and agreed to pay the Jizya (capitulation tax). At Dūmat al-Jandal he presented a white donkey which brought to him the gift of the Prophet's own garment in return.[1] The Christians of Jarbā and Adhruh attended likewise and consented to the levy of the Jizya. At Dūmat al-Jandal (also pronounced as Ḍaumat al-Jandal), which is five stages from Damascus, there was an Arab chief, Ukaidir by name, who owed allegiance to the Roman Emperor. Khālid Ibn Walīd was despatched with four hundred and twenty men to subdue him. Khālid made him captive, and later on released him on condition that he would personally appear before the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to settle terms. Accordingly, he arrived accompanied by his brother and was promised protection.

On his return from Tabūk, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was given a hearty welcome outside Medīna. Even women-folk living in seclusion repaired to receive him, while little girls chanted the song :[2]

> "The moon shone on us from the valleys of Widā' ;
> We owe thanks to God as long as there breathes a true worshipper."

The Dirār Mosque

The Hypocrites were always planning to create dissensions amongst the Muslims. They had long been scheming to erect at this place a mosque, to rival that of Qubā. Their pretext was that the people, who were unable to go to the Prophet's mosque owing to their infirmity or for any other reason, might say their prayers there. Abū 'Āmir, a Medīnite, who had turned Christian, had asked the Hypocrites to start their

1. Zurqānī, on the authority of Ibn Abī Shaiba, Vol. III, p. 86.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

preparations as he was going to ask Hiracleus for military aid, so that the country might be purged of Islam.[1]

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was proceeding for Tabūk, the Hypocrites came to him with a request to lead the prayers in the mosque which, they said, they had built for the infirm and the disabled. Thus, they said it would be consecrated and endeared to God. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) asked to be excused as he was then on his way to Tabūk. On the return journey, however, he told Mālik and Ma'n Ibn 'Adī to go and set the mosque on fire. It is this mosque that is spoken of in the following Verses :

> "And as for those who have set up a mosque for hurting and blaspheming and the causing of division among the believers and as a lurking-place for one who hath warred against Allāh and His Apostle aforetime, and surely they will swear : we intended only good, whereas Allāh testifieth that they are liars. Thou shalt never stand therein. Surely a mosque founded from the first day on piety is worthier that thou shouldst stand therein. In it are men who love to cleanse themselves, and Allāh approveth the clean." (9 : 107, 108)

Hajj and Declaration of Quittance

Mecca had fallen in the 8th year of the Hijra. Conditions being still unstable, the arrangements connected with the performance of circumambulation and the other items of its rituals had been left in charge of the unbelievers as before. However, the Muslims had observed the devotional rites led by 'Attāb Ibn Usaid, who had been made governor of Mecca. Now in the 9th year of the Hijra, the Ka'ba was for the first time, consecrated as the central House of Worship for the followers of Abrāham ; the clouds of unbelief and polytheism

1. Zurqānī, Vol. III, p. 91.

that had long hung over it were now dispelled for ever. On return from Tabūk the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent out a caravan of three hundred Muslims from Medīna to perform the Hajj at Mecca. It was led by Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him), with 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) as herald, and Sa'd Ibn Waqqās, Jubair, Abū Huraira[1] (Allāh be pleased with them) and others as instructors. Twenty heads of camel (on behalf of the Prophet) accompanied the pilgrims.

The Qur'ān has called it Hajj Akbar or the Great Pilgrimage, for it was the first time the Hajj ceremonies were observed in the original forms instituted by Abrāham. The object this time was to proclaim that it was the end of the days of Ignorance, and the dawn of the reign of Islam in the ancient sanctuary of Abrāham and Ismā'īl. It was intended to instruct the people in general in the proper ritual and to declare the ways and forms developed during the age of ignorance as false and untrue.

In an address on the Day of Offering (the day on which animals are slaughtered as sacrifice), Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) explained how people were to act. He was followed by 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him), who read out forty verses from the Qur'ānic Chapter of *Barā't* or *Tauba*. (Quittance or Repentance). He announced that the Ka'ba would no longer be open to an unbeliever, nor would any body be permitted to walk round the Ka'ba undressed, and lastly that the unbelievers having violated the promises they made, all the treaties with them were to be null and void four months from then. Abū Huraira (Allāh be pleased with him) and others rehearsed this announcement so loud that they lost their voices.[2] The first

1. *Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Manāsik, Chapter Hajj under Abū Bakr.

2. The Verses declare that the treaties concluded under the walls of the Ka'ba (the Treaty of Hudaibiya) stand repealed. But the treaty of

(*Contd. on* p. 241

portion of the *Surah* of *Barā't* which ordered such an announcement is given here :

> "Quittance is this from Allāh and His Apostle unto the associators with whom ye had covenanted. Go about, then, in the land for four months and know that verily ye cannot escape Allāh, and that verily Allāh is the humiliator of the infidels. And a proclamation is this from Allāh and His Apostle unto the mankind on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allāh is quit of the associators, and so is His Apostle. Wherefore if ye repent, it shall be better for you, but if ye turn away, then know that ye cannot escape Allāh. And announce thou unto those who disbelieve a torment afflictive. Except those of the associators with whom ye covenanted and they have not failed you in aught, nor have they backed up any one against you, so fulfil unto them their covenant till their full period. Verily, Allāh loveth the God-fearing..... O' ye who believe ! the associators are simply filthy ; so let them not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year ; and if ye fear poverty, Allāh shall presently enrich you out of His grace, if He will. Verily, Allāh is Knowing, Wise." (9 : 1-4)

Tabarī quotes Suddī to the effect that most people came over to Islam after this announcement.

Contd. from p. 240)

Hudaibiya stood already abrogated when Mecca fell, and since then the Muslims had not entered into any treaty with the unbelievers. The author has therefore, been led to say (in one of his letters...40) that these Verses may have been revealed in the year 8 Hijra, at the fall of Mecca. The author has omitted this. The Editor thinks that the Verses relating to the treaty may have possibly been revealed in year 8 A.H., but it was a year later, in the 9th year of Hijra at the time of the Hajj, that this proclamation was made public along with the injunctions relating to Hajj ; as recorded in several reports in the authentic collections of traditions.—Sulaimān.

Miscellaneous Events

Nine years of warfare were now followed by an epoch of peace, which always provides opportunities for the production of wealth. Hence *Zakāt* (poor-rate or compulsory charity at the rate of 2-1/2 % per annum) was now enjoined and officials were appointed to collect it from the tribes.[1]

Several non-Muslim communities having placed themselves under the protection of Islam, they were required to pay the Jizya in the following Verse :

> "Until they pay the tribute out of hand they are subdued." (9 : 28)

Usury was also forbidden this year, and a year later, on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage, it was publicly announced.

Najjāshī (the Negus) of Ethiopia who had given the Muslims a safe asylum in Abyssinia for several years died this year. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself announced his death in these words : "O' Muslims, your worthy brother As-Hamah is dead. Pray for his soul." Then he conducted the funeral prayer in the absence of the dead body.

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1. Tabarī, Vol. IV, p. 1722—Sulaimān.

A REVIEW OF THE BATTLES

This volume of the work, is limited merely to a simple account of events. Critical discussion and controverisal problems shall find a place in other volumes. Thus, it would be proper to deal with the controversies relating to these battles elsewhere. But in biographical works it is the battles that stand out most prominent in respect of number as well as emphasis. A student who confines himself to the biographical literature, is bound to suppose, that these tales of blood form the whole life-history of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Consequently the early works on the life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) were designated not as biographies, but as Maghāzī or battles, for instance Maghāzī Ibn 'Uqba, Maghāzi Ibn Ishāq, Maghāzī Waqidī. This manner of treatment continued till recent days. Were this way of approach to be entirely altered, the reader familiar with the old literature might feel he was reading something else, instead of a Life.

We were, therefore, persuaded to describe the military exploits al length. But to put off for another occasion the questions that arise with the perusal of this aspect of the Prophet's life would be to keep the readers in an uneasy suspense.

Non-Muslims, fair-minded as well as malicious, have been seriously mistaken in appreciating the causes and the objects of these battles. But it is not surprising. The peculiar circumstances that attend this military activity were such that a friend or foe, who might fall into error can be easily excused.

The War-like Arabs

We have first to realise the close association between a life of carnage and plunder and the people of Arabia. There is always a fundamental trait underlying the morals, habits, customs, dealings, virtues and vices—in short the entire social life of a nation, which determines the shape and development of all communal activity. The basic trait in the Arab nation was its love for plunder and man-slaughter. They developed this character because their homeland was a barren country producing nothing, and the people were ignorant and illiterate. The sheep, the goat and the camel supplied to them their food and clothing, meat for their stomach, and for their bodies rugs woven from their hair. Even this wealth was not the lot of every body, or, to be more accurate, only a few enjoyed it over and above the bare necessity. They were compelled to take to assaulting and marauding, which came to be the only means of livelihood for them. Abū 'Alī Qalī, in his Al-Amālī says, "This was because they felt bored if they had to pass three months on end without some pillaging activity, for this was the only means of their livelihood".[1]

The Arabic word *Ghanimat* for booty is derived from *Ghanam*, which in Arabic stands for goat, because *Ghanīmat* or booty consisted of goats. The word however, developed a wider denotation and could be applied even to the royal treasures of Iran and Byzantium.[2]

With the passage of time, *Ghanīmat* had evolved itself into a word most notable, most alluring and most favourite in the language and history of Arab people. Even today an Arab Sultan or Sheikh bids farewell to relations with the phrase "Sāliman Ghāniman" which means "wishing a safe

1. Al-Amālī, Vol. I, p. 6. Cairo Edition.

2. This is the author's personal research uncorroborated by lexicographers—Sulaimān.

return with a load of booty." We in Urdu use the word *Ghanīmat*, for anything we most like, for instance we say "Your visit is so very *Ghanimat* welcome." This use has its roots in ths Arabic idiom.

Economic pressure had made loot and blood-shed the common features of Arab life. Inter-tribal raiding and pillaging went on all the time, with the exception of the four sacred months set apart from religious considerations. All fighting remained suspended during these months. But it went hard to do without a means of living for three or four months in succession. Hence the invention of the "Nasā'ī" system, which made an exchange with other months of the year possible, if necessary.

Hāfiz Ibn Hajar, while writing on *Sūrah Tauba* (Immunity or Quittance) in his commentary on *Bukhārī*, says, "They made Muharram replace Ṣafar or let Ṣafar come in for Muharram that they might not miss fighting for three months at a stretch."

The Thār System

This was the original cause that gave to the Arab his love for fight. Later on, as wars continued, fresh causes came into being, which operated not less extensively or less powerfully than the original. Of these the most powerful was the law of Thār. Under this system if a tribesman was anyhow murdered, it was the collective duty of the tribe of the deceased to call for revenge. Centuries might elapse, the murderer and even his family might be dead and gone ; yet the tribe would not feel having done its duty towards the deceased until a life had been claimed from the people of the murderer. That was "Thār". Any ordinary murder could open a series of wars that might continue for centuries. This was the institution abolished by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) on the occasion of his Last Pilgrimage, when he renounced all claim to blood, in revenge of the murder of any of his tribesmen. But the Bedouin in

the wild tracts of Arabia still adheres to Thār, which is a characteristic of their national life.

Strange superstitions had grown up round the Thār doctrine. For instance, the departed soul was believed to be transformed into a bird, which, until avenged, kept hovering over the place of murder and calling out, "I am thirsty. Let me have a drink." The bird was known as "Sudā' or Hāmā." A poet, Abū Dāwūd Ayadī says :

"Death and sleep overtook them, and in the tombs where Sudā' is, there is Hāmā too for them."

Dhū al-Asba' al-Adwānī says : "O 'Amr, abuse me not and insult me not, or I will kill you in such a way that Hāmā will cry 'Satisfy my thirst.''

Another superstitious belief was that the grave of the murdered fellow would ever remain dark, if he was not avenged. 'Amr Ibn Ma'dī Karb's sister, putting the words in the mouth of the murdered victim says : "If you accept my blood money, I shall be lying in the dark grave for ever."

Hence it was not commendable to be paid for blood. The same poetess says : "If you want the blood-money, lead then the earless ostrich by the ear." (It means that blood-money was equal to an earless ostrich or equal to nothing).

It was supposed to be derogatory to one's honour if one gave way to lamentation for the murdered. "Let the disaster assume any magnitude, ye shall not find them weeping for the dead," thus runs the couplet of 'Amr Ibn Kulthūm. "God forbid, that our women should make us lose our hearts over the dead or cry over slaughter," runs yet another couplet.

If they ever lamented the death of the murdered, they did it when he had been avenged.

"The man who was pleased at Malik's murder,
Let that man come to our women in the day,

And he shall find them crying lamentations,
Bare-headed, and beating their faces with their hands at morn."[1]

A curious belief was that the soul of a man who died of a wound left the body through the wound, while in other cases, it expired through the nose, which was a great shame. Hence death by disease was called "Death by the nose" (*Hatf al-Anf*) in Arabic, and that was a disgraceful death.

Another couplet runs thus :

"Not one of our chiefs died through the nose, nor was any of our man murdered without being avenged."

Blood-shed, in short, gradually formed the basis of their national pride, ethics and customs. In other words, to this love for man-slaughter may be traced their conceptions of moral values, and it was this disposition that kept the tribes away from Islam for a very long time.

'Amr Ibn Mālik, having embraced Islam in the presence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) returned to his tribe and invited them to the new faith. But they expostulated that they were still under obligation to vengeance from the Banū 'Aqīl for a murder, and would not be converted before they had claimed a life in return. Accordingly, an immediate assault was made on the Banū 'Aqīl who had turned Muslims. 'Amr Ibn Mālik himself was one of the raiders. Later on he was always repentant for having killed a brother in faith.[2]

1. The above mentioned couplets have created some ambiguity. At one place it is said that lamentation was considered bad. At another place we are told that lamentation was permissible. The Prophet forbade lamentation. It seems probable that the Arabs did not do any lamentation unless and until the murderer was done to death. Before that no sort of lamentation was allowed among the Arabs.—Translator.

2. *Isāba*, Account of 'Amr Ibn Mālik.

Disposal of Booty

As already mentioned the internecine warfare owed its origin to economic needs. Consequently nothing was dearer to the Arabs than goods seized as booty, nor was any other means of livelihood considered more lawful and more honest. This conception of loot was so deep-rooted that it survived till long after their proselytization. The law-giver had therefore, to proceed very cautiously in this respect just as in respect of other prohibitions ; total abstention was enforced by gradual steps.

When the use of liquor was to be forbidden, the first revealed Verse only said this much :

> "They ask thee about wine and gambling. Say thou : In both is a great sin, and some benefits for men, but the sin of them is far greater than their benefit." (2 : 219)

At this 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) is reported to have remarked, "O' God, give us clear cut injunctions about drink." Later on the following Verse was revealed :

> "O' you who believe, approach not Prayers while ye are intoxicated until ye know (well) what ye say." (4 : 43)

Accordingly, at Prayer times, under orders from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) a man would announce aloud that nobody under the influence of wine should join the Prayer. Then last of all was revealed the following Verse :

> "O ye who believe, wine and gambling and stone-altars and divining arrows are only an abomination, a handiwork of Satan ; shun it wherefore, that haply ye may fare well. Satan only seeketh to breed animosity and spite among ye by means of wine and gambling and would keep ye away from the remembrance of Allāh and from Prayer, will ye not then desist." (5 : 90, 91)

With all that, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was so particular about the prohibition of drink that he got the vessels used for the purpose smashed to pieces.[1] People asked if they could make vinegar from it and they were forbidden. However, in the days of 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) some people were taken to task for getting drunk. They protested honestly believing that drink was not forbidden to the good and the virtuous, as the prohibition in the Qur'ān was followed by the words :

> "No sin is on those who believe and work righteous works for that which they have eaten." (5 : 93)

There was a good number of Companions present on this occasion. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) turned to 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās (Allāh be pleased with him) to ask him what this Verse meant. He said that the Verse had reference to the Companions who had died before the prohibition. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) confirmed it and chastised the offenders. Tabarī has confirmed it and has related this incident in detail.

What we wish to drive at by this long digression is that the after effects and unforeseen consequences of what has long been ingrained as habit and routine last a considerable length of time ; and so was the case with booty.

The first verse bearing on the subject was revealed when, at Badr, the Muslims took to seizing booty before it had been stored together. It ran thus :

> "Were it not that a writ had already gone forth from Allāh, there would have touched you a mighty torment for what ye took." (8 : 68)

A full account appears in Tirmidhī, comments on the *Sūrah al-Anfāl.* The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh

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1. This was done in the early days. Later on drinking of wine was totally banned and forbidden—Translator.

be upon him) had ruled that the Muslim combatant who killed a non-believer would be entitled to his belongings. The warriors advanced their claims on this basis, but the Companions who had not done the actual fighting and remained on guard with the flag claimed that they had a right to a share in the booty.[1] This was the occasion when the following Verse was revealed :

> "They ask thee concerning the spoils of war. Say thou : The spoils of war are Allāh's and the Apostle's..." (9 : 68)

The Verse was meant to bring it home that the warriors were not allowed to claim booty by right, the distribution of which rested with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), who might dispose it of as he pleased. It put a stop to the practice of anybody taking possession of anything he could lay hands on. Nevertheless, loot, other than loot of battles, continued to be practised without compunction for a very long time. *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd, has it from *Anṣārī* that they were on a journey with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) when they felt sorely distressed with hunger. Haply they caught sight of a few goats near-by. They seized and killed them and put the meat on fire. When it was reported to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), he came, and with the bow in his hand overturned the kettles, saying that meat obtained by plunder was no better than the corpse of an animal.[2]

The battle of Khaibar was fought in the 7th year of the Hijra. Till then they felt so little scrupulous about it, that when order had been restored, they sacked the cattle and the fruit belonging to the Jews. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) got angry, called together the Companions and said, "God did not make it lawful

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book al-Jihād.
2. *Ibid.*

for you to enter into the houses of the people of the Book (except when permitted) or to kill their women, or devour up their fruits, when they pay you what is due from them ?"

Much as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) desired to see his followers less interested in pillage and plunder, a change in sentiment with respect to it was long in coming. The rebuff at Uhud had been due only to the people rushing to the fruits of victory the moment victory was in sight, whereas the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had strictly instructed the archers not to move from their posts whatever the fate of the combat. They moved, and immediately the enemy took advantage of it and attacked from the rear. So did they lose at Hunain because people started collecting booty too early.

What attraction it had for them may also be judged from the fact that sometimes people were grieved, when unbelievers declared for Islam, only because they could no longer take possession of their goods. *Sunan* Abū Dāwūd speaks of a Companion who, while taking part in a Sariyah, intended to deliver an attack when the tribesmen came to him with tears in their eyes. He promised protection to life and property provided they recited the sacred *Kalima* (There is no god but Allāh, and Muhammad is His Prophet). They did so, and obtained protection. When the Companion returned to his comrades, they complained that he had deprived them of their gains.[1] When the matter came to the notice of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) he praised the Companion and said, "For every man you set free you will be rewarded so and so."

Curiously enough people continued to believe it to be a meritorious act for quite a long time. Abū Dāwūd reports that a Companion asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Kitāb al-Adāb.

Allāh be upon him) what he had to say about a man who desired to join an expedition against non-believers so that he might be a little better off financially. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) declared that he should gain nothing in the Hereafter. People wondered when they were told what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had said, and thought the reporter had not been able to make out the Prophet's meanings. He was sent back to ask the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) twice again ; and received the same reply.[1] More instances of similar type could be cited.

Savage Ways

Wars so intensely fought and so extensively common, had given birth to various customs extremely savage and inhuman. Some of them are described hereunder :

1. When captives of war were put to the sword, women and children were not spared, but burnt alive.

2. They would make a surprise attack all of a sudden, when the foe lay asleep or unawares, and then they would start killing and looting. This was the strategy most commonly practised. There were warriors called "Fātik" or "Fattāk" who were renowned as master of these tactics. Tāb-bat Sharra, Sālik, Salaka were captains of this strategy.

3. Burning living bodies to death was common. 'Amr Ibn Hind, an Arab chief, had a brother killed by the Banī Tamīm. He took a vow to destroy a hundred lives for one. Accordingly, he made a raid and the enemy took to flight leaving an old woman, named Hamrā'. She was captured and cast into fire. A horseman named 'Ammār happened to arrive, who was asked by 'Amr what had brought him there.

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād.

He said, "I have been going without food for several days ; the smoke rising in the air led me to suspect some cooking going on." 'Amr ordered that he should also be thrown into fire and the order was obeyed. Jarīr refers to this incident in the line :

'And 'Amr humiliated you as you had done him,
And temptation led 'Ammār thither[1] to meet his end."[1]

4. Children were made to serve as targets for shooting arrows. In the days when the battles of Dāhis and Ghabrā' were being fought, Qais left his children as hostages with the Banū Dhubyān. Hudhaifa, the chief of the Banū Dhubyān, found for these children a novel use. He would tell them to stand in a valley and then practise marksmanship. If he missed all his shots one day, the recreation was postponed for the next and then gone through again in the presence of a gathering that well-enjoyed the fun.[2]

5. One method of inflicting death was that they mutilated a living body and then left it to die in greatest agony. In the war between the Ghatafān and the Banī 'Āmir, Hakam Ibn Tufail strangled himself to death only to escape this mode of dying as mentioned in 'Aqd al-Farīd.

6. The men from 'Uraina who, after feigning conversion to Islam before the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), made off with his slave, chopped off the limbs of the helpless captive and then ran thorns into his tongue and eyes so that he died

1. *Majma' al-Amthāl*, Kirmānī, p. 342, Iranian Edition.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 477.

tossing and turning in his agony.[1]

7. Even dead bodies could not escape the thirst for revenge which manifested itself in many an abominal form. They would cut off their limbs, ears and noses. Thus did Hind make a garland from the ears and noses of Hamza (Allāh be pleased with him) and other martyrs at Uhud and put it round her neck.

8. They made vows to sip wine off the skulls of their foes if they would have them in power. Sulāfa who had two of her sons killed at Uhud by 'Āsim took a vow to make this use of his skull. Sometimes they would take out the liver of the slain and chew it down. How Hind feasted herself on Hamza's liver in this way has already been spoken of.

9. They would cut open the abdomen of pregnant women and took pride in it. 'Āmir Ibn Tufail, the well-known hero and the chief of the Hawazin says : We cut open the wombs of the pregnant women belonging to our enemy tribe. They had turned mad and we gave them a blood bath."

Nature and Causes of the Prophet's Ghazwāt

(It is to be noted that this topic is here being treated as a statement of historical facts. The critical study of the true nature of Jihād (religious war) has been reserved for other volumes of this book).

Having stated the main characteristics of the Arab nation, let us now turn to discover the causes that underlay the military activities of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the reforms he introduced in the code of war.

1. This has been mentioned in all the books on traditions, but the details given here are quoted from *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Vol. II, Chapter II, p. 67. *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim* tells us of his blinding.

The word Ghazwa or battle has been to our historian a mode of all work, with such a wide scope as to denote even the pettiest scuffles, a few men sent out to restore order or maintain peace were enough for them to make a Ghazwa. Along with Ghazwa, there is another word Sariyah and the difference pointed out is that Ghazwa requires a fixed minimum of participants (not less than 400 or 500 as is mentioned in *al-Qāmūs*) while a Sariyah has no such limits set to it ; a single man despatched to look after anything in connection with some fighting may be termed as a Sariyah. To others a Ghazwa is a battle where the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was personally present.

In fact the activities which the historians have designated as Sariyah fall into several categories :

1. The work of the Intelligence Department—collecting information regarding the movements of the enemy.
2. A move forward for defence against a reported attack.
3. Harassment of the Quraish on business trips, to force them to allow Hajj and 'Umra to the Muslims.
4. Punitive expeditions to restore peace and order.
5. A band of missionaries sent out to propagate Islam with a party of armed guards for security. In such cases strict instructions were given against the use of sword for conversion.

A Ghazwa or battle proper took place only on two occasions :

1. When resistance was offered to the enemy committing aggression against Muslim territory.
2. When Medīna was threatened and forces had to advance to forestall hostile designs.

All combats or activities of military nature that took place in the life-time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) were undertaken for purposes such as enumerated above.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had shifted from Mecca, the Quraish made up their minds to crush Islam in its new home. They were not slow to realize that a lease longer of life to the Islamic movement would mean a death-blow to their ancestral faith on the one hand, and on the other, to the supremacy and influence they commanded over the entire country. Their programmes were to infest Medīna with their own armed strength, and simultaneously to make the tribes see in the success of Islam a danger to the liberty and life of all.

One *Anṣārī*, when his townsmen were promising fealty to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) at 'Aqaba, had the foresight to ask, "Friends, do you know what you are committing yourselves to. It is a challenge of war to Arab and 'Ajam (the non-Arab world) at once." From *Musnad* by Dārimī and other sources we have already quoted statements saying that all Arabia was up in arms against Medīna when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) came down to settle there. The threat was so real that the Medīnites and Migrants both had to sleep at nights with their weapons on their persons. It has also been mentioned, on the authority of Abū Dāwūd, that the Quraish, in a message to 'Abdullah Ibn Ubbey, had asked him to see to it that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) left Medīna, else they (Quraish) would come to make an end of the Medīnites and the Muslims both.

Intelligence Department

Security measures, in these circumstances, were imperatively needed, if Islam and the seat of Islam were to be

saved. The first step in this direction was the organization of a system of espionage and intelligence on a large scale. To this the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) gave his attention from the very start. From time to time small parties were sent out to different places which though intended for espionage had to go armed and in a body.

It is these expeditions that historians call Sariyah, and they suppose they had, as their objective, either a surprise attack on an unwary foe or the looting of a caravan.

That these parties were usually made up of at most a dozen persons is a sure indication of their intent and purpose for a regular attack is unthinkable with such numbers.

Sariyah 'Abdullāh Ibn Jahsh : So was 'Abdullāh Ibn Jahsh put at the head of a party of twelve to go towards Mecca in the 2nd year of the Hijra. A sealed letter was given to him which he was not to open for two days. When it was opened after two days, it ran thus : "Proceed on, till you come to Nakhla', which lies between Mecca and Tā'if. Stay there and keep yourself informed of what the Quraish are doing."[1]

Defence

The system thus organized bore fruit, and contemplated designs against Medīna were soon discovered and forestalled. Most of the Sariyahs related in histories were of this type. As we have been passing over them so far, it is advisable to describe a few as specimens. We shall try to prove on the authority of the earliest biographers that they were all defensive in character :

1. *Sariyah Ghatafān* (2nd Hijra, 624 C.E.) : The cause of this Sariyah was a report that the Banū Tha'laba and the Mahārib had gathered a combined force at

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 23.

Dhū Amr with the object of an advance against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). The man who mobilised this army was named Dathūr.[1]

2. *Sariyah Abū Salama* (2nd Year of Hijra, 624 C.E.): This was caused by the news received by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that Talha and Salama, sons of Khuwailad had marched out with their tribesmen and followers to fight the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).[2]

3. *Sariyah 'Abdullāh Ibn Unais* (3rd A.H., 622 C.E.): This party was sent to put Abū Sufyān Ibn Khālid to death. Ibn Unais was despatched because news was brought to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that Abū Sufyān Ibn Khālid was collecting his tribesmen and others to fight against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

4. *Ghazwa Dhāt al-Riqā'* (5th A.H., 627 C.E.): A spy came to the Companions and broke the news that the Banū Anmār and the Tha'laba and others were mobilising forces to fight against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) started against them.

5. *Ghazwa Dūmat al-Jandal* (also read as Daumat al-Jandal) (5 A.H., 637 C.E): Reports say that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was informed of a great concentration at Dūmat al-Jandal which was soon to march for Medīna.[3]

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1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 35.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 45.

6. *Ghazwa Murīsī*, (5 A.H., 627 C.E.) : The Banū Mustaliq was a branch of the Khuzā'a and they were in alliance with the Banū Mudlij. Their chief was Hārith Ibn Darār. He started, followed by his people and such others as had been under his influence, and called upon them to fight the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), to which they were all agreeable.[1]

7. *Sariyah 'Ali Ibn Abi Tālib against Fadak* (6 A.H., 658 C.E.) : The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was informed that the Banū Sa'd had been mobilizing at Fadak to help the Jews.

8. *Sariyah Bashīr Ibn Sa'd* (7 A.H., 629 C.E.) : It was reported to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that a section of the Ghatafān was assembled at Janāb and 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn had promised to join their attack against the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

9. *Sariyah 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ to Dhāt al-Salāsil* (8 A.H., 630 C.E.) : Dhāt al-Salāsil is 8 stages from Medīna. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was informed that a large number of the Qudā'a had assembled to advance against him.

Harassment of the Trade-Caravan

As already mentioned on the authority of Bukhārī, long before wars broke out between the Quraish and the Muslims, Abū Jahl had uttered a warning to Mu'ādh that they would not be permitted to go round the Ka'ba if they did not refuse shelter to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ; and Muā'dh had replied that if they were refused access to the Ka'ba by the Quraish, the *Anṣaris* would cut off the trade route between Mecca and Syria (for Medīna lay on

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, pp. 44, 45.

the caravan route between Mecca and Syria). The Ka'ba was the cynosure of Muslim eyes, for the Muslims followed the faith taught by the builder of the Ka'ba. With all that, the Quraish would not permit them to visit the sanctuary and walk round it. The only way to make the Quraish see reason was to close their trade route to Syria. That might force them to concede to the Muslims the right to perform a Hajj or an 'Umra.

Historians often speak of a force having been despatched or the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself having gone out, in order to intercept a caravan. These undertakings were all meant to achieve the object mentioned above—namely the freedom of worship in the Ka'ba, the House of God. The trade caravan of the Quraish used to go well-armed, never formed of fewer than a hundred or two hundred men. Naturally attempt to harass it occasionally resulted in an encounter, and when the Quraish were beaten off, the merchandise fell into Muslim hands. But historians have construed these activities as primarily aimed at loot.

It was this constant harassment that eventually obliged the Quraish to come to terms at Hudaibiya. The Muslims, under certain restrictions were permitted to perform the Hajj. What this threat to the trade route meant for the Quraish may be judged from the fact that Abū Dharr Ghifārī, when put to torture for having declared for Islam, was instantly set free, the moment the Quraish were reminded by 'Abbās that his tribe was settled on the trade-route and might block it up in retaliation. Again the treaty of Hudaibiya stipulated, as desired by the Quraish, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) would be under obligation to return to the Quraish the Meccan Muslims who might thereafter seek refuge in Medīna. Consequently, a number of Muslims had to form a settlement of their own on the borders of Syria, which rendered the trade route unsafe for the Quraish. The Quraish then willingly declared

that they would not stand in the way of any Muslim who chose to migrate to Medīna. Next year they grew wiser still, and allowed the Muslims to perform their Hajj and 'Umra as well. After that the Muslims never harassed the caravan ; on the other hand they provided armed forces to protect it.[1]

Restoration of Law and Order

We need not repeat that peace and order were unknown to Arabia from one end to the other. The tribes without any exception were always at daggers drawn. The sacred months too were not sacred, and they would often rename them on one pretext or the other to validate killing and slaughtering. There was no security for tradesmen and caravans were plundered as a matter of routine. Even today they suffer at the hands of the Bedouins.

The Prophet's mission was not only to preach peace by word of mouth, but to enforce it with a strong hand in all Arabia...nay all the world over, for that matter ; for nothing is so detestable to God as murder and bloodshed :

> "Because of that We prescribed unto the Children of Isrāel : whosoever slayeth a person, except for a person, or for corruption in the land, it shall be as though he had slain all mankind." (5 : 32)

> "And when he turneth away, he speedeth through the land, that he may act corruptly therein and destroy the tilth and the stock. And Allāh approveth not corruptness." (2 : 205)

> "The need of those who wage war against Allāh and His Apostle and go about in the land corrupting is only that they shall be slain or crucified or their hands and feet be cut off on the opposite sides, or be banished from the land." (5 : 33)

1. *Fath al-Bārī*, Vol. I, pp. 61, 62.

Traditions say that when 'Adī, the son of Hātim Tā'ī, embraced Islam, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said to him that the work he had then on hand would come to such a fruition by the grace of Allāh, that a camel-rider journeying from San'ā to Hadar Maut should have nothing to fear but Allāh or a wolf (that might carry away his goats). These are the words of Abū Dāwūd. *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* gives the version that Allāh would bring his work to such a fruition that a woman travelling from Hira to the Ka'ba should have nothing to fear by Allāh. 'Adī adds that he had lived to be an eye-witness to women travelling unattended from Hira to the Ka'ba without any fear but that of God.

There are so many incidents which biographers have classed as Sariyah, but which, in fact, had merely been measures taken to enforce freedom of trade or restore public peace. We cite here a few instances :

1. *Sariyah Zaid Ibn Hāritha* (6 A.H., 628 C.E.) : In the sixth year of the Hijra Zaid travelled to Syria with some merchandise. On his way back, when he was near Qurā, some members of the Banū Fazāra laid it on him and made off with his goods. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent a small punitive force and they were punished.[1]

   A little earlier the same year, Dehyah Kalbi who had taken the Prophet's message to the Hiracleus, arrived at Hama on his way back from Syria. There he was robbed by members of the Hunaid and despoiled of everything but the clothes which were not in good condition. Zaid was ordered by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to bring the offenders to book.[2]

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 63.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

2. *Sariyah Dūmat al-Jandal* (also read as Daumat al-Jandal) : In the year 4 A.H., 626 C.E., news was brought to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) that there was a concentration of men at Dumat al-Jandal, which lay fifteen stages from Medīna in the direction of Syria ; and that this band was harassing traders. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself led a force against them. The men escaped away, but the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) stayed there for a number of days and detailed small parties of armed men to various places all over the neighbouring region.[1]

3. *Sariyah Saif al-Bahar* : This concern for traders was not limited to Muslims ; on the other hand, after the treaty of Hudaibiya, care was taken to protect the trade caravans of the Quraish as well. In the eighth year of the Hijra (630 C.E.) a caravan of the Quraish was coming back from Syria. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) despatched a contingent of 300 men, of whom 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) was one, under Abū 'Ubaida Ibn al-Jarrāh (Allāh be pleased with him) as trouble was feared from a tribe called Juhaina. The contingent went upto a place five days journey from Medīna. How faithfully the Muslims did their duty is best proved when we remember that, running short of supplies, they had sometimes to be content with a single date for a whole day's meal.

Saḥīḥ Muslim gives us a detailed account ; but the causes of this expedition have been variously stated. The original source is Jābir (Allāh be pleased with him) who was personally partaking in it. One of

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1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 65.

the reports says that it was organized to attack the Juhaina. The books on military exploits, known as Maghāzī, have the same tale to tell. But the wordings in other reports are: "To visit the Quraish"[1] or "to look after the Quraish."[2] These phrases may easily be supposed to mean that the force was to plunder the Meccan caravan. But it would be absurd supposition in view of the fact that the treaty of Hudaibiya had been signed. With this background the only valid interpretation is that it was sent to protect the Quraish against the Juhaina. And this is the conclusion Hāfiz Ibn Hajar has arrived at.[3]

4. *Ghazwa Ghābah* : The Arabs were hardened robbers, and the severest penalties could not deter them. Even the pasture-land of Medīna known as Ghābah, did not remain safe from their raids. In the 4th year of the Hijra, the Fazara had to face a famine. 'Uyainah Ibn Hisn, the chief of this tribe was kindly allowed by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to let his cattle out at feed in the Muslim territory, which had no dearth of water. But in the sixth year of the Hijra, this very 'Uyainah raided Ghābah, the pasture-land of Medīna, lifted away twenty she-camels belonging to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and killed Abū Dharr's son, the guard of the grazing field. Biographies always class this event as a Ghazwa.

Arabia, from one end to the other, declared against Islam, and a long series of wars and battles continued till the

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter, Watch and Ward of the Coastal Trade.
2. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, Chapter Maghāzī.
3. *Fath al-Barī*, Vol. VIII, p. 61.

Fall of Mecca. If there is anything to explain this phenomenon, it is to be found in the fact that slaughter, loot and robbery on which the Arabs had depended for their living was sought to be stopped by Islam once for all. Hence the Arab society could not consider anything so hostile to it as the message of Islam.

Reasons for Surprise Attacks

The tribes were either settled at a spot, or living a nomad life in tents. The nomads had no home, any piece of ground overspread with green and grooved with a stream could serve as a camping ground. When short of water, they would move on to another place that was reported to be well-supplied. The Arabic word for such wandering tribes is *As-hāb al-Wabr*. These were the people who robbed and plundered all along. To control or suppress them was not an easy affair. They baffled the punitive forces sent against them by running into hills. Hence attempt was made to take them by surprise so that they might not disappear or run away.

In the accounts of Sariyahs we often read that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) despatched forces that marched at nights, fell upon unwary tribes and plundered their goods. Historians record many such expeditions, which have led the European writers to opine that Islam sanctions robbing of its enemies. Margoliouth explains it by the hypothesis that, for quite a long time, Muslims had no means of living and hence the Prophet had to resort to unexpected raids and robberies.

But a comprehensive survey of all the available data, diligently and laboriously collected, shall reveal the truth that a surpise attack was made only when it was feared that the opponents, if they got wind of it, would escape away to mountain tops or some other place of shelter. More than once it did happen that they got informed and moved away

to unknown whereabouts. We give below a number of instances, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) himself leading the expedition in some cases, and in others not :

1. *Ghazwa Banū Sulaim* (3 A.H., 625 C.E.) : "And they dashed up quick as unbridled horses would do, but those men had moved away towards their stream and so they had to return."[1]

2. *Ghazwa Dhāt al-Riqā'* (4 A.H., 626 C.E.) : "And the Bedouins ran away to the hill-tops."[2]

3. *Sariyah 'Ukāsha Ibn Mihsan* (6 A.H., 628 C.E.) : "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) despatched 'Ukāsha Ibn Mihsan with forty men, who dashed up quick like unbridled horses but those people had run away."[3]

4. *Sariyah 'Ali Ibn Abī Tālib* (6 A.H., 628 C.E.) : "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent 'Alī (Allāh be pleased with him) with a hundred men. They marched at nights and hid in the day time. Thus they arrived at Hamāj and then delivered an attack capturing 500 camels and 2,000 goats. The Banū Sa'd fled away with their women."[4]

5. *Ghazwa Banū Lehyān* (6 A.H., 628 C.E.) : "The Banū Lehyān, hearing of their approach, hurried off to hill-tops."[5]

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1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, pp. 24, 60, 61, 64, 65 etc.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Sariyah 'Umar Ibn Khattāb* (7 A.H., 630 C.E.): "They marched at night and hid themselves during the day. The Hawāzin got informed and ran away. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) found their camps deserted."[1]

7. *Sariyah Ka'b Ibn 'Umair* (8 A.H., 630 C.E.): "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) despatched fifteen persons to Syria. At Dhāt al-Talha they came across a numerous party. They invited them to Islam, which they declined and answered with arrow-shots. They thus forced the Muslims to fight in self-defence. All the Muslims were killed save one who came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with the report. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of vengeance, but those people left the place for somewhere else. Ibn Sa'd says, "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) thought of sending a force against them and then it was discovered that they had shifted to another place."[2]

Propagation of Islam

Apart from the expeditions sent for these purposes, there were other organizations for the propagation of Islam. The country being disturbed all over, and the people everywhere inflamed against Islam by hostile elements, the parties that went out for missionary purposes were always in danger of life.

1. *Sariyah Bi'r Ma'ūna* (3 A.H., 625 C.E.): In the month of Ṣafar of the third year of the Hijra, seventy preachers were sent to the Kilāb, on the invitation

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd, p. 65.

2. All these deatils are taken from *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd.

of their chief, to instruct them in Islam. The whole party was done to death by the Re'l and the Dhakwān near Bi'r Ma'una. Only one could escape with his life to tell the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) the sad tale.

2. *Sariyah Mirthad* (3 A.H., 625 C.E.): "About the same time, that is Safar A.H. 3, the tribes of 'Adul and Qarah made a request for men to instruct them in Islam. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent a party of ten companions comprising 'Āsim, Khubaib, Mirthad Ibn Abi Mirthad and others. At Raji' they were attacked by the Banū Lehyān and again only one man could escape.

3. *Ghazwa Banū Lehyān* (A.H. 6, 628 C.E.): "In A.H. 6, a force was ordered to punish the Banū Lehyān, which failed because the Banū Lehyān came to know of it, and ran away."

4. *Sariyah Ibn Abī 'Ewaja* (7 A.H., 629 C.E.): "In A.H. 7, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), sent a mission consisting of fifty persons to the Banū Salim. It was led by Ibn Abī al-'Ewaja. The mission explained Islam to them, but they refused to believe and started shooting arrows. The missionaries had to fight, but the band of fifty was no match for a whole tribe. Only Ibn Abī al-'Ewaja, the leader was saved."[1]

5. *Sariyah Ka'b Ibn 'Umair Ghifārī* (8 A.H., 630 C.E.): "In Rabī' al-Awwal of the year 8, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) sent Ka'b Ibn 'Umair with fifteen others as missionaries to Dhāt al-Talh. Dhāt al-Talh is a

1. *Tabaqāt*, Ibn Sa'd.

place in Syria on this side of the valley of Qurā. Here again the message of Islam was received with arrow-shots. They were killed, only one running off to carry the news to Medina.[1]

It was for these reasons that the presence of armed bands with missionaries was an imperative need. The commander of the force was however, instructed to bear in mind that propagation of Islam, and not fighting was to be aimed at. Khālid Ibn Walīd, when deputed, after the Fall of Mecca, to go to the Banū Khuzaima with thirty others, was clearly told that the object in view was to preach Islam and not to measure swords. Ibn Sa'd writes: "The Prophet deputed Khālid to go to the Banū Khuzaima in order to preach and not to fight." And 'Allāma Tabarī says: "The Prophet sent Sariyahs to various places in the neighbourhood of Mecca for propagating Islam, but did not allow them to fight." Khālid, in spite of the instructions, found use for his sword. When the news was broken to the Prophet, he rose to his feet, and with his face towards the Ka'ba said aloud three times, "O' Allāh, I am not to blame for what Khālid has done." Khālid was replaced by 'Alī who paid blood-money for every person killed, including children and even dogs and something in excess of all that. It is a report that appears in books on traditions as well, though various versions.

Similarly when 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) was sent off to Yaman with 300 horsemen the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said to him, "When you are there, you shall not fight until you are attacked."

In this category also belong the Sariyah or iconoclastic commissions sent out to various parts of the country to demolish the idols after the Fall of Mecca. Arabia had been

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1. The survival of one man in most cases is to be explained by supposing the escape to have been intentional to let the Prophet know about the fate of the party—Translator

all spotted over with temples, each tribe having a deity of its own. The Fall of Mecca had heralded a whole sale conversion, yet the ignorant and superstitious conception of the greatness and power of idols lingered on with some tribes. They no longer believed that the idols were entitled to any devotion from men, yet they and their fathers, had for centuries bowed to them in awful reverence. They had not the courage to demolish with their own hands these embodiments of human error and mischief. Were a single piece of these blocks of stone to be dislodged, thought the ignorant, the sky might fall down in pieces, the earth might burst up and a storm of disasters overtake them all.

The people of Tā'if, when submitting to Islam, laid down the condition that their temples would be allowed to stand for at least a year, a condition that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) could not accept. Then they offered as an alternative that they would not demolish it with their own hands. Several other tribes newly converted to Islam were found to be shirking this duty. More sensible Muslims with firmer convictions had to be deputed to execute the demolition work vicariously for the local community. Accordingly the following were named to demolish the temples noted against their names :

1. Khālid Ibn Walīd...The temple dedicated to 'Uzza.
2. 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ...The temple dedicated to Suwā' (Sawā').
3. Sa'd Ibn Zaid Ash-halī...The temple dedicated to Manāt.
4. Abū Sufyān Ibn Mughira...The temple dedicated to Lāt.
5. Jarīr...The temple of Dhī al-Khalasa.
6. Tufail Ibn 'Amr Dausī...The temple of Dhī al-Kaffain.

7. 'Ali Ibn Abī Tālib...The temple of Fils.

Methods of War Reformed

War is the worst manifestation of human activity. It was particularly so in Arabia, presenting scenes of barbarity, bloodshed, callousness and brutality. Only the wonder-working power of a prophet could purge this inhuman institution of all its wickedness and sublimate it into a sacred duty of man; and this is what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) accomplished.

Among a people who have succeeded to a thousand year old heritage of tyranny and pillage, even the best civilized government shall have to start by adopting for a time the ancient ways and traditions, just as in medical science they sometimes treat similars by similars.

The military exploits in the early history of Islam, therefore, must present certain features already in vogue. For instance surprise attacks with the attendant carnage and taking of captives had been the rule. Islam abolished it for good. But had the abolition been enforced at the very outset, the consequences should have been very disastrous. The foe would ever be ready to come down unexpected, while the Muslims would be helpless against such tactics. They on their part would be bound to communicate their intentions to the foe, enabling them to move away or get prepared for defence. But as Islam acquired power and ascendancy, the old practices died out one by one, till they had all vanished.

The way how the pre-Islamic Arabs fought their battles and the barbaric methods they practised have already been described at some length. The reader is requested to read these pages over again and then see what a change for the better was brought about by Islam.

For instance, it was declared to be totally unlawful to kill women, infants, youngsters, servants and the aged.

It was a rule with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) to include this prohibition in the instructions given to the commander of an expedition on the eve of his departure.[1] Abū Dāwūd records it in the following words: "Do not kill an old man, an infant, a youngster or a woman."[2]

Whenever the Prophet's glance alighted on a woman's corpse in the course of a battle, he used to pronounce a strict prohibition. *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim* has a number of reports bearing on this point.

It was usual with the pre-Islam Arabs to tie down a captive to something and then to kill him with arrows or slash him with a sword. They called it *Sabr*. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) strictly forbade it.

Once 'Abdul Rahmān, son of Khālid, had some captives killed in this way. Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī heard of it and said, "I remember the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) always forbidding it. By God I will not allow myself to kill even a fowl in this fashion." 'Abdul Rahmān felt penitent and instantly set four slaves free to atone for the sin.[3]

The Arabs did not mind if they broke faith when they were at war. So the unbelievers did with the Muslims at Bī'r Ma'ūnah and on the other occasions. They swore oaths and gave their word of honour in order to persuade the Muslims to accompany them, but suffered them to be killed on

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1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Chapter Jihād or Holy War.

2. Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād.

3. Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, p. 13, Chapter "Qatl al-Asir."

the way.[1] The Qur'ān refers to such breaches of faith, when it says :

> "How can there be for the associators a covenant with Allāh and His Apostle save for those with whom ye covenanted near the Sacred Mosque ? Act straight with them, so long as they act straight with you. Verily, Allāh loveth the God-fearing." (9 : 7)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had strict orders that a promise once made must be kept at all costs. The Qur'ān has several injunctions on this subject here and there. They are unambiguous and emphatic. In the days of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and the early Caliphs, we come across surprising instances of loyalty to the word given.

When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) settled at Medīna, some of the Companions were obliged to stay on at Mecca. Hudhaifa Ibn Yamān and his father had likewise to stay for personal reasons. Shortly before Badr, they were discovered by the Quraish to be preparing to leave. They were stopped and told that if they reached Medīna, they would be coming back to fight against the Meccans. Hudhaifa gave them his word of honour that he only wanted to go to Medīna and nothing more, and then he was allowed to proceed. The two reached the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) when the Muslims were engaged at Badr and asked for the Prophet's permission to join the combat. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did not allow, for they were pledged other wise.

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1. The account of Bi'r Ma'unah in the preceding pages is very short. The swearing and pledging their words is not spoken of there. Secondly, here the Muslim party is said to have been killed at the destination, while earlier it is reported to have been killed on the way. I stick to the earlier account

Abū Rāfi' had been sent as a messenger to the Prophet. As he attended on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), he felt an urge within, and declared himself a Muslim. He said, "Let me not go back to the unbelievers again." "You are a messenger", said the Prophet, "and it would be breach of faith to detain you. So go back now and come back again."[1]

At Hudaibiya Abū Jundal (also pronounced as Jandal) approached the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) just when the treaty had been concluded. He had chains on his feet. He unbared the wounds he had received to show how he was tortured by the Quraish. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "We have just pledged ourselves to return to the Quraish any refugee fleeing from Mecca." Upon this Jundal with tears in his eyes appealed to all the Muslims assembled there, who were sorely touched and broke into tears in turn. It seemed they would no longer be able to observe self-restraint. 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) was restless. Abū Bakr (Allāh be pleased with him) walked to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) again and again. Against all this Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set a higher price on being true to one's word. Abū Jundal had to go back in chains as before.

According to the Arab custom, messengers were not immune. The one sent to the Quraish before the Treaty of Hudaibiya, had a narrow escape, and that too owing to the intervention of outsiders, while his camel was killed.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) decreed that messengers should not be killed. When Musailma's message bearer attended on the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and talked insolent words, the

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, p. 23.

Prophet said, "It is not the rule to kill messengers, else thou shouldst have been certainly executed." From that day, say the historians, it was an established rule to treat the messengers as immune.

The treatment meted out to the prisoners of war was as inhuman in Arabia as anywhere else. The Muslim prisoners of war during the Crusades were made to work like beasts of burden.

'Allāma Ibn Jubair, when passing through Sicily during one of these Crusades was simply shocked to see this treatment. He writes :

> "Among the pathetic sights witnessed in these circles are the Muslim prisoners who go about in fetters doing the hardest labour, and so are the Muslim women with iron rings on their shins put to hardest tasks, which wrings one's heart."[1]

The Prophet's instructions in this behalf were that prisoners should not be put to any inconvenience whatsoever. At Badr when the prisoners were placed in charge of the Companions, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) ordered that they should have nothing to complain of with regard to food drink. Consequently, they were treated to food, while the Companions managed to live on dates. At Hunain they had six thousand prisoners, they were all set at liberty, and each was provided by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) with a suit of clothes, made of Egyptian cloth. Ibn Sa'd has spoken of this.

Hātim Tā'ī's daughter, when brought as a prisoner to Medina, was honourably lodged in a corner of the Mosque, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) promised to send her back under escort as soon as somebody

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1. *Travels of Ibn Jubair*, p. 307, Leyden Edition of 1907.

from her town chanced to drop in. Accordingly, she was sent off to Yaman under an escort in a few days, well provided for the journey.

The Qur'ān, when naming the virutes of men dearer to Allāh says :

> "And they feed with food, for love of Him, the needy, and the orphan and the captive..." (76 : 8)

When a tribe was attacked, it was usual for the invading army to spread itself out over a large area all around. Thus access to houses was rendered difficult, roads were closed and the passengers were robbed of their goods. This had been the practice for a very long time. Muslim warriors, in a certain expedition, had resort to the same methods. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had it publicly announced that one who did such things was not fighting for Allāh (and therefore, doing nothing meritorious).

Abu Dāwūd has a report from Mu'ādh Ibn Anas, which runs thus : "In a certain Ghazwa I was with the Prophet. A number of people entered the camp of the other party and maltreated and robbed them. The Prophet ordered a man to go round and proclaim that one who broke into houses and harassed, robbed or killed will not be entitled to the grace of Allāh for his fighting."[1]

Abū Dāwūd says that after this announcement people used to camp so closely nestled that a single sheet of cloth could cover the area they occupied.[2]

The great problem was that the people had felt sentimentally attracted to what was got as booty, and so strong had been this sentiment that wars had been mostly fought for its

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād, Vol. I, p. 360.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 348.

sake alone. Great caution had to be exercised to effect a reform in this respect. In the days of paganism booty was the dearest object. Strange as it seems even under Islam it was long supposed to be something that earned the grace of Allāh. Abū Dāwūd relates that a man asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) how the man would fare who wanted to fight for Allāh and at the same time make some worldly gain. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said that he earned no reward. This was generally considered to be surprising and people urged the man to go and ask a second time, for he might have mistaken the Prophet's meaning. He was sent a second and again a third time to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), for they would not believe that the Prophet might have said such a thing. Only when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had repeated the same answer for the third time, they felt assured of it.[1]

Once some Companions were despatched to engage a tribe. One of them moved ahead of the ranks. The tribesmen approached him with tears in their eyes. He asked them to subscribe to the Muslim Creed (that there is no god but Allāh and that Muhammad is His Prophet), and they would be saved. They accepted Islam and the attack was called off. The fellow Companions reproved the peace-maker, saying that he had deprived them of the booty they were expecting. Abū Dāwūd records the words of the Companion thus : "My comrades reproved me saying that I had deprived them of the booty."[2] When they complained of it to the Prophet, the Prophet admired the Companion who had given the option and said that for every man let off he would have such and such reward in the Hereafter.

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād, Vol. I, p. 345.

2. *Ibid.*

Booty in the Holy Qur'ān was termed as the "worldly effect", and the crazy interest in it was discouraged again and again. When the Muslims met a reverse at Uhud, because some of them, instead of facing the enemy, fell to collecting booty, the Qur'ān admonished them in the following Verse :

> Of you some desired the world, and of you some desired the Hereafter...." (3 : 152)

At Badr when the people turned to plundering the enemy stores and effects before they had the permission to do that, or, as some of the commentators have it, made men captive for the sake of ransom, they were warned in these words :

> "Ye seek the gear of the world, while Allāh seeketh the Hereafter ; and Allāh is Mighty, Wise." (8 : 67)

Notwithstanding the repeated warnings, at Hunain which took place in the 8th year of the Hijra, they were again carried by their love for loot and consequently suffered. Bukhāri, when describing Hunain says, "The Muslims fell to collecting booty, and the infidels started a down-pour of arrows that gave us no respite."[1]

It was why the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), from time to time, tried to clear doubts on the subject. Once some body said to him, "There are people who fight for fame, and yet others who do so for a display of valour. Which of these shall be deemed to be fighting in the way of Allāh ?" The Prophet replied, "The one who fights to glorify the Word of Allāh."[2]

Ultimately he declared that a warrior fighting under the banner of Islam, whatever his motives, shall lose two third

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1. Bukhārī and Muslim.

2. *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim*, Chapter "The Prisoners" ; *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd.

of his reward given him here, with only a third left for the Hereafter. He shall have his full if he totally refuses to take anything."[1]

As a result of such teaching, booty, once so dearly sought, lost its charm and the motive for taking part in a battle came to be limited to the glorification of the Word of Allāh. The following incident illustrates the change: Wāthila Ibn Asqa' was a Companion. He had not the wherewithal for an expedition when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) set out for Tabūk. He went about the streets of Medīna crying if there was any who would provide him with an animal to ride on, on the promise of an equal share of booty. One of the *Anṣārīs* offered to him a camel and provisions. Wāthila in this battle got a number of camels as his share of spoils. He went to them and said, "Here are the camels we had agreed on dividing between us." "Let them be all your share," replied the *Anṣārī*, "This is not what I had bargained for" (*i.e.*, I had bargained for reward in the Hereafter).[2]

During wars particularly when supplies ran short and could not be arranged for, any movable or immovable property of the enemy could be taken away as a lawful possession. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) forbade it and put an end to this practice. Abu Dāwūd relates an *Anṣārī* reporting that they were once out on an expedition and had to face great scarcity and distress. By chance they caught sight of a flock of goats made a dash and seized them all. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) when he was informed came to the spot and saw the kettles of meat simmering on fire. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) had a bow in his hand, with which he overturned the kettles and the whole

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Vol. II, Chapter "Holy War"—Sulaimān.

2. *Ibid.*,

food was lost in sand. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, "Plundered effects are as bad as the dead flesh of a dead corpse."[1]

War becomes an Act of Piety

Fighting, apparently a cruel act, was shorn of all sordid motives and raised to such level of sanctity and saintliness that this manifestation of the devil in man was sublimed into a pious act of highest godliness. It was now to aim at protecting the weak and the oppressed against the high-handedness of the strong and the cruel. The Qur'ān says :

> "Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and God is well able to assist them. Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say 'Our Lord is Allāh." (6 : 39)

The country had all along been subject to disturbances and breaches of peace, and a life of security and tranquillity had been unknown to the people. Jihād or the war in the cause of Islam was to be restored to with the object of eradicating disorder and establishing peace. The Qur'ān says :

> "And fight with them until there is no more persecution..." (5 : 39)

Those who did not believe in God and the Divine Law of Retribution allowed themselves any form of cruelty, undetermined nor did they possess a criterion for right and wrong. To bring such people round and save their souls from the tyranny of their own misdeeds was now ordained to be the objective for which fighting could be permitted. The Qur'ān says :

"Fight those who do not believe in God, nor in the Last

1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwud, Vol. II, Book on Jihād.

Day, nor do they prohibit what God and His Apostle have prohibited..." (4 : 29)

Success in a battle or acquisition of a territory was not to be achieved so that the victors might roll in wealth or take delight in the pride of power. The object to be aspired was to teach submission to God, live an austere life, extend a helping hand to the destitute, propagate good and virtue and keep people from wickedness. All this was clearly enjoined upon every Muslim by the Qur'ān.

The wealth that a conquest brought in was not to belong to the victor, to be squandered away on his pleasures or utilized for the benefit of the minions of his court in varying degrees. How it was to be used was explained thus :

"And know that whatever thing ye acquire in war, a fifth[1] of it is for God and for the Apostle and for the near of kin and the needy and the way-farer." (5 : 41)

Jihād or the holy war was exalted into an act of piety not only in respect of its ultimate aims, but also in its external aspect. The Holy Qur'ān says :

"O' ye who believe, when ye meet a party, then be firm, and remember Allāh much, that ye may be successful." (5 : 45)

The various formulae uttered at prayers as *Allāhu Akbar* and *Subhana Rabbī al-A'la* (God is Great and Hallowed be the name of Allāh, the Highest) were also prescribed to be repeated in the course of a campaign. Jābir Ibn 'Abdullāh says that they recited *Allāhu Akbar* when going up a height and *Subhāna Rabbī al-A'la* when climbing down. Bukhārī reports that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), when ascended a hill-top, called out *Allāhu Akbar*

1. After deducting this one fifth, the rest falls to the share of the army.

three times. Once while marching for a battle, the Companions were reciting the words of praise for Allāh in a loud voice. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) advised them to be less-vociferous, for Allāh Whom they invoked was not deaf.[1] Similarly once he (the Holy Prophet) told 'Umar (Allāh be pleased with him) not to be too loud while reciting the Qur'ān at prayers.

Note: Abū Dāwūd records a report from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar that in their campaigns it was their custom to utter *Allāhu Akbar* when ascending heights, and *Subhan Allāh* when moving downward,[2] and that the same process was prescribed for Prayers; that is to say *Allāhu Akbar* when the head was raised up, and *Subhan Allāh* when it was lowered in prostration. The report is a little mis-stated. Prayer was not instituted on the pattern of Jihād, but *vice-versus*, the Jihād on the pattern of Prayer, for certainly Prayer had been ordained at the very beginning, while Jihād only dated back to the Ist year of the Hijra. Anyhow, the report is eloquent enough to establish the close similarity between Jihād and Prayer, the two aspects in which the selfsame spirit of devotion and submission expressed itself.

In short, war that once reflected the atrocious and barbaric side of human nature was, now turned, through the teachings of Islam, into an institution for the glorification of Allāh, establishment of peace, suppression of turbulence, and protection of the oppressed. What was more it was conducted as a service at a mosque or church with praises of Allāh on the lips of the devotees.

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1. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād.

2. *Sunan*, Abū Dāwūd, Book on Jihād, Vol. I, p. 357. The actual words are, "Whenever the Prophet and his armymen scaled any height, recited *Allāhu Akbar* and when descended down utter the words *Subhana Rabbi al-A'la*. Consequently Prayer too was founded on this principle.

Distinction Between a Prophet and a Conqueror

On the field of battle, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) did, no doubt, stand armed like a warrior—his sword and his shield in his hands and a helmet on the head—yet the difference that mark a prophet from a military commander was unmistakably visible.

Just when the battle was raging the fiercest, arrows came down thick like rain drops, human limbs were shed off as dry leaves in the autumn, and the enemy was advancing like a swelling tide, just at such a moment the Man of God stood with hands raised in prayer. Or just when the combatants grappling with one another at close quarters, this Man of Allāh was seen prostrating with his forehead on the dust. For instance, at Badr in the very thick of the fight, 'Ali (Allāh be pleased with him) turned up thrice to see how it was going with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), and each time found him praying with his head down on the ground in prostration. There was an incessant downpour of arrows and the fate of the battle was not yet in sight, but the warrior who made no use of his weapons took up a handful of earth and cast it away in the direction of the foe. Next moment the enemy forces broke up as clouds sometimes clear away in a over-cast sky, and the field lay deserted.

At Hunain, unable to stand the violence of the attack, the Muslim force could not hold its ground. Not one of the 12,000 warriors (with a few honourable exceptions) was standing by his side, while storm of ten thousand bow-men was advancing shooting incessant volleys. But the Tower of Truth, stood rooted to the spot, and the air rang with a majestic call: "I am the Prophet of Allāh, and I am not a false Prophet."

Just at the time when the armies had joined in battle, when swords were flashing all around and the field was strewn

with amputated limbs, in short, just when death was staring in the face, the hour of the day called for Prayer. In a moment the followers lined up behind the Commander-in-Chief, who led the Prayer. War cries yielded place to *Allāhu Akbar*. The valiant warriors, till then grim and furious, putting up a spirited fight and toying with life, were now seen bowing down in all humility, suppliant and full of tears. The worshippers left for the front in the midst of the Prayer and engaged the enemy to relieve the rest and enable them to join the remaining part of the Prayer. While the congregation thus went through with it, turn by turn in batches, the Imām (the Holy Prophet) who conducted the Prayer remained at his Prayer without a break.

And it is to be noted that even in the midst of the din and turmoil of battles, the Man of Allāh never missed a moment when something could opportunely said to teach, guide, reform and purify. Once when victory had just been won, the warriors were lost in the joy of it. They were selling off the booty they had seized, and individual shares were bringing in thousands. One of the Companions in high spirit came to the Prophet and said, "O' Messenger of Allāh, never before was my share of loot so paying. I have made full three hundred Ūqiyahs (about 300 ounces)." "But", said the Prophet, "will you not like to be told of a still more paying business." "What is that ?", asked the warrior most eagerly. "Two *Rak'at* after the obligatory Prayers," was the reply.

INDEX

A

Abbān ibn Sa'id, 138

'Ābbās, 22, 24, 26, 28, 60

'Abbās, ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 13

'Abd al-Mālik, 20

'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 10, 13

'Abd al-Qais, 4

'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Aūf, 21, 22

'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās, 98

'Abdullāh ibn 'Atik, 157, 158

'Abdullāh ibn Hudhaifa, 146

'Abdullāh ibn Jahash, 9, 46, 49, 257

'Abdullāh ibn Jubair, 62, 65

'Abdullāh ibn Khatāl, 199

'Abdullāh ibn Maktūm, 40

'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, 23

'Abdullāh ibn Rabi'a, 62, 208

'Abdullāh ibn Rawāha, 18, 157, 169, 183, 184, 185

'Abdullāh ibn Ubayy, 2, 3, 4, 11, 45, 53, 60, 89, 91, 96 102, 103, 159, 256

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar, 48, 61, 119, 172

'Abdullāh ibn Unais, 77

'Abdullāh ibn Zam'a, 23

'Abdullāh ibn Zubair, 203

'Abdur al-Raḥmān ibn 'Uyaina, 160

Abū 'Amir, 63, 65

Abū 'Amir Ash'ari, 214

Abū al-'Āṣ, 24, 28, 29, 154, 155

Abū 'Aziz, 25

Abū al-Bakhtari, 21, 22, 24

Abū Bakr, 12, 17, 18, 26, 42, 47, 55, 66, 70, 73, 136, 142, 166, 221, 229, 230, 274

Abū Barā', 77, 78

Abū Dāwūd, 89

Abū Dharr, 160

Abū Dujāna, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68

Abū Huraira, 240

Abū Jahl, 3, 6, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 42, 45, 51, 53, 58, 62, 134, 187, 199, 202, 203, 208

Abū Jandal, 141, 142, 145

Abū Lubāba, 13

Abū Mūsa Ash'ari, 214

Abū Qatāda, 209

Abū Rāfi ibn Abi al-Huquaiq, 91, 119, 156

Abū Sa'id al-Khudri, 61, 71

Abū Salama, 77

Abū Sufyān, 14, 35, 42, 43, 47, 50, 53, 54, 58, 62, 65, 69, 70, 73, 74, 81, 93, 112, 117, 147, 148, 149, 152, 189, 190, 191, 193, 215, 217, 270

Abū Tālib, 19, 193

Abwā', 7

'Adi, 13, 14

Adam, 195, 196

'Adnān, 204

'Adul (Tribe), 79

Afra, 21

Aḥmad, Imām, 129

Ahzab (The Ghazwa of), 99, 106

'Ā'isha (Wife of the Holy Prophet), 49, 71, 85, 103, 105, 118, 124, 130, 162, 163, 179, 186, 200, 221, 222, 223, 224, 228, 229, 230

'Ali, 19, 39, 55, 56, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 113, 114, 120, 139, 167, 168, 181, 182, 183, 189, 240, 269, 271

'Āliyah, 13

'Āmir (Tribe), 94

'Amir ibn Akwa', 162

Amir Mu'āwiya, 10, 71

'Āmir ibn Tufail, 78, 79

Amra bint 'Alqama, 65

'Amr ibn 'Abd Wudd, 112, 113, 114

'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, 112, 270

'Amr ibn al-Hadrami, 9, 10, 12, 15, 18, 49, 50, 51

'Amr ibn Hajash, 95

'Amr ibn Umayya, 79, 94, 146

Anas, 41, 60, 71, 159

Anṣār, 1, 2, 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 24 25, 28, 36, 37, 39, 43, 44, 45, 47, 42, 54, 56, 63, 72, 77, 218

'Aqil (Brother of 'Ali), 22, 24

Aqra' ibn Hābis, 218

'Araba Ausi, 61

Arabia, 2, 5, 12, 53, 59, 76, 94, 107, 110, 128, 146, 147, 156, 158, 180, 196, 212, 235, 237, 244, 246, 264, 275

'Arafāt, 100

'Āṣ ibn Hāshim, 24

'Āsim ibn 'Adi, 13

'Āsim ibn Qatāda, 90

'Āsim ibn Thābit, 79, 80

Aswad ibn Amir, 23, 29

Athil, 13

'Attāb ibn Usaid, 197

B

Badr, 2, 3, 10, 11, 14, 20 23, 29, 30, 36, 40, 41, 44, 47, 49, 51, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 89, 90, 92, 93, 112, 177, 275, 280

Bai'at al-Ridwān, 132, 138, 177

Bakhla, 10

Bakr ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, 174

Banū Asad, 106, 107

Banū Bakr, 187

Banū Dumra, 7, 8

Banū Fazāra, 159

Banū Khazraj, 3, 12, 16, 88, 205

Banū Mudlaj, 8

Banū Mustaliq, 100, 101, 171, 221

Banū Quainqua', 57, 83, 89, 90

Banū Sa'd, 106

Bānū Sulaim, 106

Barā' ibn'Āzib, 61

Barza (Daughter of Mas'ūd Taqafī), 59

Basbasah, 13

Bilāl, 22, 194, 197

Bishr ibn Barā', 172

Budail ibn Warqa, 135

Bukhāri, Imām, 130, 142

C

Caesars, 226

Chosroes Parvez (Khusro Parvez), 150, 151

Christian, 105, 129, 178, 235, 238

D

Dār Qutni, 232

Dehyah Kalbi, 146, 147

Dhakawān, 78

Dhat Ajdhal, 13

Dirār ibn Akhtal, 112, 114

Duraid ibn Simma, 214

E

Eden (A garden in Paradise), 226

Egypt, 146, 153

Ethiopia, 146, 151, 242

European, 1

F

Farā', 7

Fātima (Daughter of the Holy Prophet), 55, 56

Fātima (Daughter of Walid), 59, 69

G

Gabriel, 229

Ghassān, 205, 235

Ghatfān (Tribe), 106, 156, 158, 159, 169, 178

Ghilan ibn Salama, 216

H

Hafṣa (Daughter of 'Umar), 75, 221, 223, 224, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232

Hākim ibn Hizām, 5, 15, 50, 51, 217

Hamza, 6, 19, 39, 60, 62, 63, 64, 72 74, 75, 254

Hanzala, 65

Harām ibn Milhān, 78

Harb, 10

Ḥāritha ibn Nu'mān, 56

Ḥārith ibn 'Āmir, 13, 80

Ḥārith ibn Dirār, 100, 103, 104

Ḥārith Ghassāni, 146, 147, 154

Hārith ibn 'Umair, 184

Hasan, Imām, 75

Hassān, 115

Hatib ibn Balta'a, 146, 153, 189

Hawazin, 206, 207, 212

Hawdha ibn 'Ali, 154

Hawdha ibn Qais, 159

Hijāz, 151

Hind (Wife of Abū Sufyān), 59, 60, 62, 64, 71, 198, 254

Hiracleus, 147,148, 149, 238

Hubāb ibn Mundhar, 60, 162

Hubāb ibn Munghir, 14, 16

Hubal (Name of an idol), 70, 204

Hudaibiya (The Treaty of) 132, 135, 143, 154, 155, 177, 179, 187, 188, 213, 260, 264

Hudhaifa ibn al-Yamān, 15, 16, 18, 70, 71, 273

Hunain, 177, 206, 209, 215, 275

Husain, Imām, 82

Huwaitib ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza, 247

Huyayy ibn Akhtab, 54, 97, 106, 109, 116, 119, 120, 122, 123, 156, 169, 170

I

Ibn al-Athir, 126

Ibn Hajar, Hāfiz, 89, 93, 101, 104, 125, 231, 232, 233, 245

Ibn Hātim, 129

Ibn Hishām, 165, 173

Ibn Ishāq, 142, 151, 173, 201, 202, 216, 243

Ibn Jarir, 5, 129, 253

Ibn Kathir, 129, 233

Ibn Khatāl, 200

Ibn Minda, 104, 125, 126

Ibn Nadr, 66, 67

Ibn Qamiyya, 66, 68

Ibn Qayyim, 152, 175, 177

Ibn Sa'd, 104, 174, 175, 267, 275

Ibrāhim (The Prophet), 132, 194, 203

Ibrāhim (Son of the Holy Prophet), 220

'Ikrama, 21, 58, 62, 93, 134, 187, 199, 202, 203

Injil, 140

Irān, 150

Isbāt ibn Nadr, 202

Ismā'il (The Prophet), 203

Israel, 122

Itbān ibn Mālik, 235

J

Ja'far Tayyār, 151, 183, 184, 185, 186

Jarir, 270

Jeddah, 198

Jerusalem, 147

Jesus Christ (The Prophet), 146, 203

Jews, 1, 2, 3, 53, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 98, 105, 115, 116, 121, 122, 157, 158, 159, 162, 164, 165, 169, 171, 172, 178, 250

Ji'rrāna, 216, 217,212

Jubaira, 112, 114

Jubair ibn Muṭ'im, 60, 64

Juhaina, 7

Juwairiya, 103, 104, 105, 171, 221

K

Ka'ba, 3, 132, 133, 135, 142, 188, 192, 194, 195, 197, 204, 240, 259, 260, 262, 269

Ka'b (Tribe), 207, 208

Ka'b Ashraf, 84, 91, 92, 93, 94

Ka'b ibn Mālik, 40, 41, 52, 67, 237, 239

Ka'b ibn 'Umair, 267

Kaūthar, 14

Khadija (Wife of the Holy Prophet), 28, 50

Khaibar, 39, 97, 106, 116, 119, 152, 156, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 173, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 200, 221, 250

Khaithama, 49

Khālid, 10

Ḵẖālid ibn Sa'id al-'Āṣ, 152

Khālid ibn Walid, 62, 65, 112, 134, 135, 154, 155, 185, 192, 193, 212, 238, 269, 270

Kharrāsh ibn Umayya, 137

Khubaib, 80

Khunais ibn Ash'ar, 193

Khunās (Mother of Mus'ab ibn 'Umair), 60

Khuzā'a (Tribe), 74, 135, 187, 188

Khuzaima ibn Mudrika, 204

Kilāb (Tribe), 77, 207, 208

Kināna ibn al-Rabi ibn Abi al-Huquaiq, 97, 106, 158, 159, 166, 173, 174, 175, 176

Kurz ibn Jabir Fihri, 8, 11, 46, 193

L

Lahyān (Tribe), 77, 79, 205

Lāt (Name of an idol), 204

M

Ma'alāt, 13

Maghāzi, 1, 5

Mahmūd ibn Muslima, 173

al-Mā'ida (*Sūra*), 176

Mālik, Imām, 202

Mālik ibn 'Aūf, 207, 208, 214, 218

Manāt (Name of an idol), 204

Marbatah (Fort), 164

Marhab, 167, 168, 169, 172

Mariyah Qibtiya, 125, 152, 153, 220, 230, 231, 232, 233

Marthad, 189

Mawāhib Ladunniya, 5

Marwān ibn Hakam, 51

Mecca, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 29, 35, 37, 43, 46, 58, 60, 62, 76, 99, 106, 133, 134, 135, 138, 144, 145, 155, 177, 178, 181, 187, 189, 190, 192, 201, 203, 206, 212, 215, 239, 240, 273, 274

Medina, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 22, 25, 26, 30, 37, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 53, 54, 60, 61, 62, 69, 72, 74, 77, 83, 91, 92, 95, 99, 100, 101, 107, 110, 111, 112, 119, 120, 123, 144, 145, 151, 152, 156, 159, 162, 164, 176, 177, 178, 181, 185, 191, 196, 204, 226, 235, 237, 238, 255, 256, 258, 260, 261, 264, 273, 275, 279

Miqdād, 12, 189

Miqyas ibn Subāba, 199, 201

Moses (The Prophet), 12

Mu'ādh, 18, 20, 21

Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, 203

Mu'āwiya, 198

Mu'awwidh, 20, 21

Mudarr, 4

Mughira, 10

Mughira ibn Shu'ba, 136, 137

Muhājir, 6, 7, 8, 13, 16, 24, 36, 37, 39, 47, 60, 77, 102, 108, 133, 213, 220

Muḥammad (The Holy Prophet), 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 125, 127, 128, 130, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 147, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 176, 178, 180, 181, 184, 186, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 208, 209, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 230, 231, 235, 236, 237, 238, 240, 242, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 256, 258, 259, 262, 264, 266, 269, 272, 273, 274, 275, 277, 278, 279, 282, 283, 284

Muḥammad ibn Maslama, 93, 94, 165, 173

Mujdhar, 21, 22

Mukhshi ibn 'Amr Dumri, 8

Munabbeh ibn al-Hajjāj, 24

Munis, 60

Munsarif, 13

Muqauqis (The Potiphar), 152

Murisi (Ghazwa), 99, 100

Mus'ab ibn 'Umair, 16, 25, 62, 66

Musāfi' (A well-known poet of Arabia), 59

Muta (The battle of), 154

Muzaina, 7

N

Nadir (Tribe), 83, 89, 95, 96, 97, 109, 119, 123, 156, 170, 171

Nadr ibn Hārith, 24

Najran, 199

Nakhlah, 9

Naufal, 10, 22, 112

Naufal ibn Mu'āwiya, 216

Negus, 146, 151, 152, 242

Nejd, 78

Nisā'i, 4, 202, 245

Nitāt (Fort), 164, 165

Nizāmi (Poet), 151

Nu'āim ibn Mas'ūd Ashja'i, 116

Nudair ibn Ḥārith, 217

P

Persia, 226

Q

Qais ibn 'Adi, 217

Qamūs (Fort), 164, 165

Qara (Tribe), 79

Qarta ibn 'Umar, 188

Quraish, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 35, 36, 43, 44, 45, 49, 50, 51, 54, 58, 59, 60, 64, 65, 76, 80, 87, 88, 89, 90, 95, 100, 106, 109, 116, 117, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 144, 145, 154, 181, 187, 193, 206, 218, 221, 225, 259

Quraiza, 83, 95, 96, 109, 110, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 156, 170

Qur'ān, 3, 17, 30, 36, 37, 40, 48, 73, 97, 105, 110, 115, 117, 121, 128, 132, 137, 138, 140, 195, 196, 209, 215, 227, 240, 249, 273, 274, 275, 276, 278, 280, 281

Qusārah (Fort), 164

R

Rāfi' ibn Khadij, 61, 62

Raihāna, 125

Ra'l (Tribe), 78

Rauha, 73

Rita (Wife of 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ), 60

S

Sabā' Ghaithāni, 64

Sabā' ibn 'Urfata, 162

Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh, 3, 6, 7, 16, 45, 60, 112, 118, 121, 124

Sa'd ibn Waqqāṣ, 4, 6, 12, 66, 69

Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda, 12, 42, 47, 60, 112, 192

Sa'd ibn Zaid, 270

Mariya
220,
Marth
Mawāl
Marwā
Mecca,
29,
99,
145,
190,
239,
Medin
13,
44,
69,
100,
120,
(
'ādh
Mu'ādh
Mu'āwi
Mu'awi
Mudarr
Mughir
Mughir
Muhājir
39, 4
220

Ṣafā', 197

Ṣafiyya (Wife of the Holy Prophet), 169, 170, 171, 221

Ṣafiyya (Sister of Hamza) 72, 115

Ṣafwān ibn Mu'āwiya, 81, 198

Ṣafwān ibn Umayya, 30, 62, 187, 208, 217

Sallām ibn Abi al-Huquaiq, 97, 106, 119, 156, 158

Salam ibn Mishkam, 54, 165, 172

Salama ibn 'Akwa', 160

Sālim (Fort), 164

Salit ibn 'Amr, 146

Salmān Fārsi, 107

Samura, 61

Saūda, 25

Sawiq (The Ghazwa of), 53, 54

Shaddād ibn al-Aswad, 65

Shāfi'i, Imām, 202

Shaiba, 19, 24, 42

Shaqq (Fort), 164

Shujā' ibn Wahb, 116

Sufyān ibn Khālid, 77

Suhail, 141

Suhail ibn 'Adi, 217

Suhail ibn 'Umar, 25

Syria, 3, 6, 29, 37, 45, 47, 50, 146, 183, 235, 260, 263

Syrian, 7

T

Tabari, 10, 47, 152, 166, 216, 233, 235, 241, 249

Tabūk, 41, 124, 235, 237, 239

Tā'if, 9, 177, 204, 206, 215

Ṭalḥa, 63, 66, 68, 77

Ṭalḥa ibn Barā', 89

Thābit, 70

Tha'laba, 99

Thaqif, 206

Torah, 82, 121, 140

Tufail ibn 'Amr Dausi, 270

U

'Uayina ibn Hisn Fazāri, 107, 160, 218

'Ubaida ibn Ḥārith, 6, 19

'Ubaida ibn al-Jarrāh, 263

Uhud (The battle of), 53, 58, 61, 62, 69, 70, 73, 75, 76, 80, 90, 154, 163

'Umair ibn Abi Waqqāṣ, 13

'Umair ibn Wahb, 30, 198

'Umar, 18, 25, 26, 27, 41, 42, 55, 66, 67, 69, 70, 103, 114, 138, 141, 142, 143, 166, 167, 172, 175, 190, 191, 194, 211, 221, 224, 225, 230, 248, 249, 282

Umayya ibn Khalaf, 3, 13, 22, 24, 25, 42, 45

Umm Habiba (Daughter of Abū Sufyān), 152, 221

Umm Hakim (Wife of 'Ikrama), 59
Umm Kulthūm, 145
Umm Salama, 82, 143, 162, 225
Umm Salit, 71
Umm Sulaim, 71
Umm Umara, 71
'Umra, 3
'Uqba ibn Mu'ait, 145
'Urwa ibn Mas'ūd Thaqafi, 136, 137, 215, 216
'Urwa ibn al-Ward 'Abasi, 98
'Urwa ibn Zubair, 10, 20, 49, 50
Usair ibn Rizām, 157, 158
'Usfān, 79
'Usiyya, 78
'Utba ibn Rabi'a, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23, 24, 46, 49, 51, 60
'Utba ibn Ubaid, 144, 145
'Uthmān, 10, 63, 138, 236
'Uthmān ibn 'Abdullāh, 214
'Uthmān ibn Ṭalḥa, 194
'Uzza (Name of an idol), 70, 204

W

Waddān, 7
Wahshi, 60
Walid, 10
Wāqid ibn 'Abdullāh Tamimi, 50
Western, 1

Y

Yamama, 146
Yamān, 70, 151, 154, 203

Z

Zahra, 14, 23
Zaid, 127, 128, 129
Zaid ibn Hāritha, 182, 183, 184
Zaid ibn Khusaib, 100
Zaid ibn Thābit, 28, 61, 80, 81, 82
Zainab (Wife of the Holy Prophet), 126, 127, 128, 129, 222, 229
Zainab (Daughter of the Holy Prophet), 28, 220
Zainab (Wife of Salām ibn Mishkam), 171, 172
Zainab bint Khuzaima, 82
Zam'a ibn al-Hajjāj, 24
Zam'a ibn Sukn, 67
Zohri, 5
Zubair, 19, 20
Zubair ibn al-'Awwām, 62, 66, 72, 73, 173, 192
Zubair ibn Surad, 219
Zurqani, 5

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